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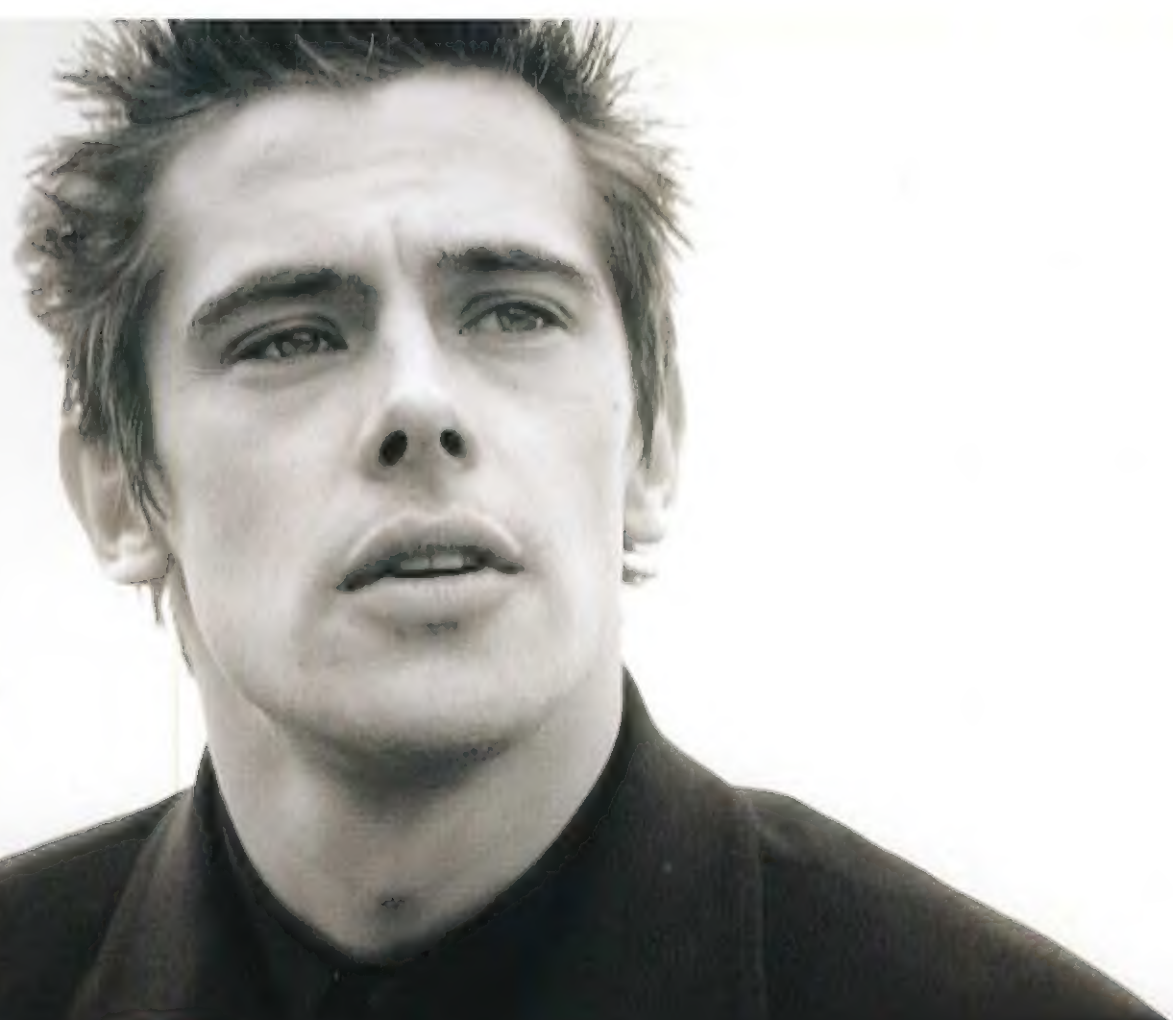
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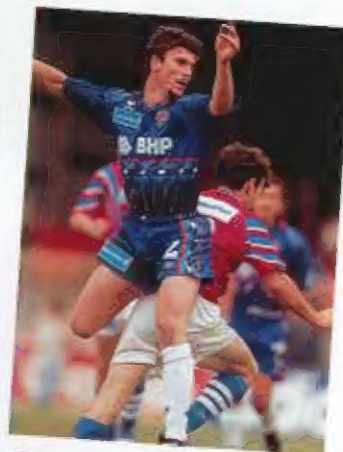


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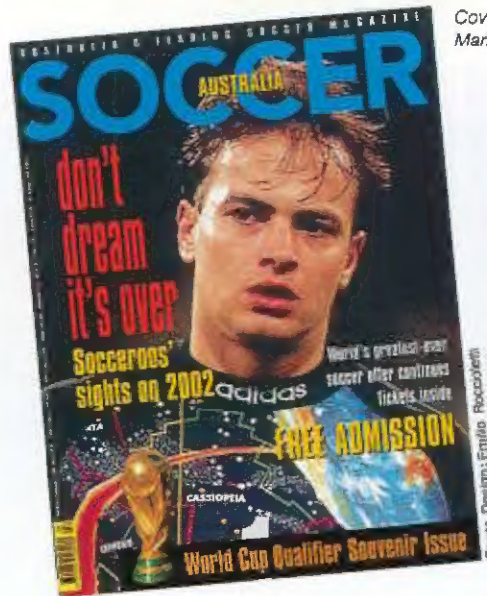
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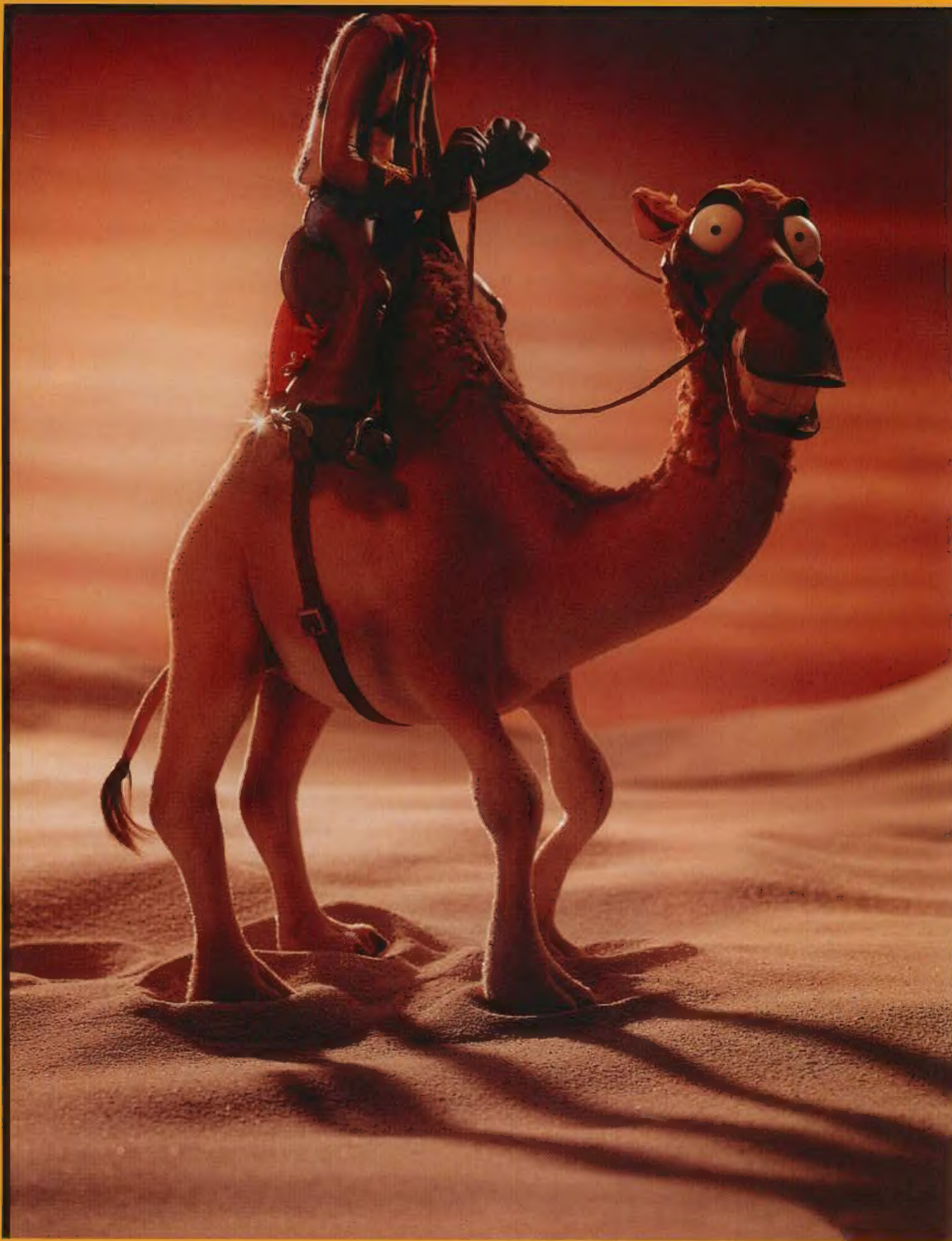
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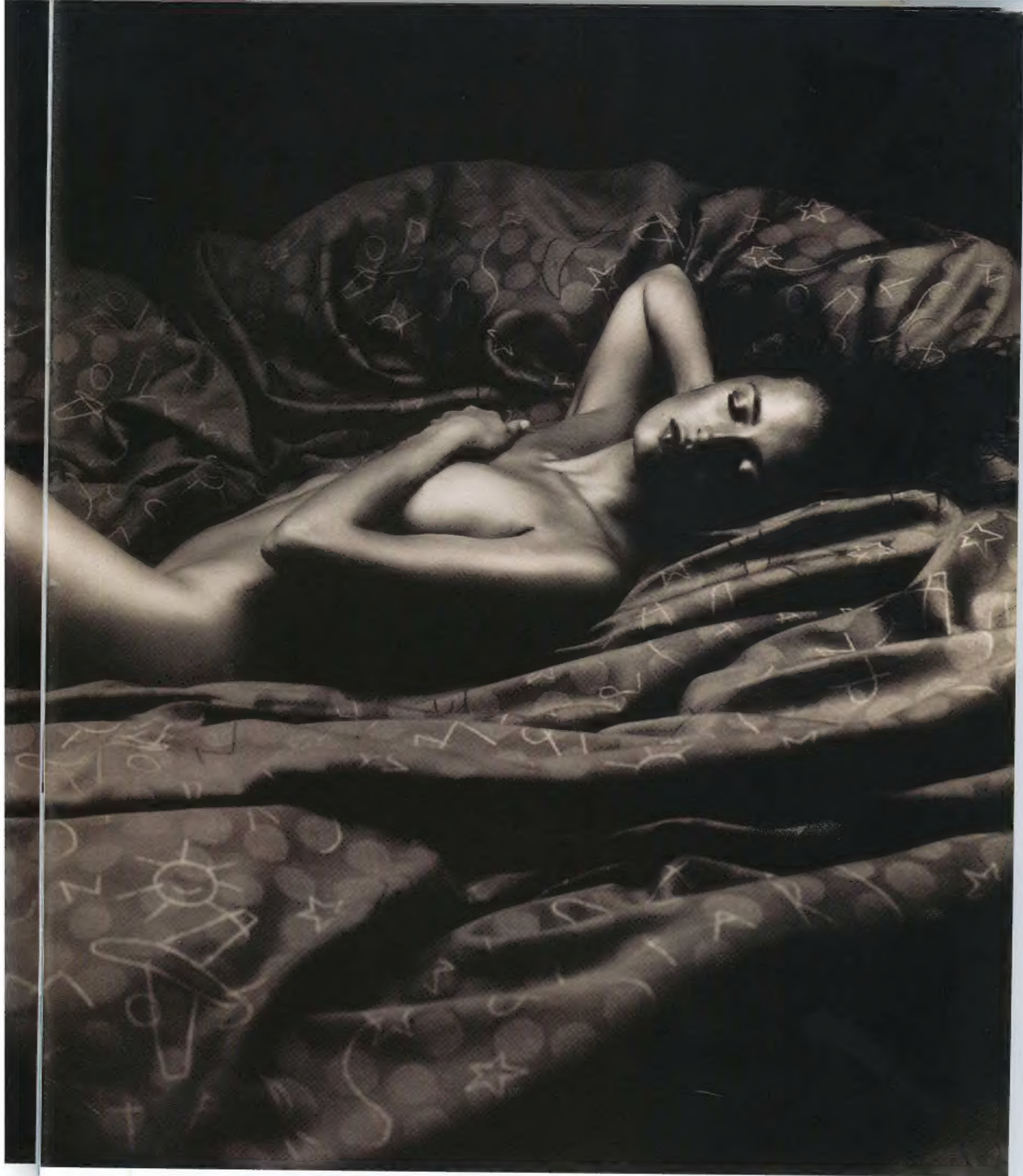
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border wars

As one country and western singing great once put it, life on the road can sure be hell.

The players from all 14 Ericsson Cup clubs will testify to that - clearly, the novelty of regularly jetting off interstate is all pain for little gain. Changes in routine, different time zones, in some cases altered sleeping patterns, unfamiliar surrounds at grounds seen only once or twice a year and hostile crowds all make for a recipe for disaster. Success on the road - and particularly interstate - is a huge task. A win on the road often takes on an even greater significance than home victories, particularly with the rapidly-expanding national competition meaning more interstate travel than ever before for most clubs. Travelling troubles are expected for clubs in leagues worldwide, but it is certainly the case here in Australia, where the distances clubs must travel for many away games are con-



siderably greater than in most European domestic competitions. Those headaches have intensified since the long-overdue inclusion of a Western Australian side, Perth Glory, last season. By comparison, local away trips are not as daunting. That journey often means a car journey, or bus trip at worst. So pity the poor sods from Brisbane and Perth, who have to fly interstate - and then perhaps face subsequent bus trips - for every single away fixture. Setting aside the records of relative newcomers Carlton and Perth, of every other current Ericsson Cup team only Canberra has not won in every other league-playing state. Outside the NSW state border the Cosmos are hopeless, having won just one game interstate in 21 attempts, back in 1995/96 at the Melbourne Knights. Our exclusive chart includes the interstate games record of every current Ericsson Cup

club since the competition commenced in 1977 and including all home and away games played up to the end of round 8 in the 1997/98 season. League games only (i.e. no

Interstate away games can lead to disorientation, as Sydney United discovered when they played at Carlton earlier this season.

finals or cup matches) are included in the totals.

ALL TIME INTERSTATE TRAVEL RECORD FOR EVERY CURRENT ERICSSON CUP TEAM

team	pld	w	d	L	success rate
Carlton SC	3	2	1	0	77.8 %
Sydney United	81	33	25	23	51.0 %
Perth Glory	17	8	3	6	50.9 %
Marconi Fairfield	138	61	27	50	50.7 %
Melbourne Knights	116	46	25	45	46.8 %
South Melbourne	196	63	46	87	41.4 %
Adelaide City	249	79	69	101	40.8 %
Adelaide Sharks	206	63	52	91	39.0 %
Gippsland Falcons	52	15	12	25	36.5 %
UTS Olympic	128	29	42	57	33.6 %
Newcastle Breakers	41	10	10	21	32.5 %
Wollongong City	103	21	26	56	28.8 %
Brisbane Strikers	85	17	20	48	27.8 %

coaching tips no.1

Dress with flair

Newcastle Breakers coach John Kosmina has always believed in marrying fashion with practicality. Hence his choice of this pair of undeniably suave UV-protective spectacles. Rumours that Kosmina

soccer'00 victory

Iran may have won the battle that mattered at the MCG, but the Socceroos were



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is about to launch his own brand of sunglasses have been scotched by the Breakers man.

soccer'00 victory

Iran may have won the battle that mattered at the MCG, but the Socceroos were

clear victors on the fashion front. Australia has finally got it right with a natty combination of gold shirt with black shorts and socks - stylish enough to double as evening wear.

The Iranians, meanwhile, presented themselves in an uninspired red, white and green ensemble that one fashion industry insider likened to a pizza box.

Shame, Iran, shame.



flashback

WORLD CUP 1990

The 1990 World Cup is widely regarded as one of the worst of all-time - the cynicism of the Argentinians, a swag of penalty shootouts where the best team lost and a record low goals-per-game average. Here's a snapshot of the best and worst of Italia 90.

Player of the tournament

It had to be Italian super-striker Salvatore 'Toto' Schillaci. He was hardly a household name even in his own household before Italia 90, but he will be remembered forever for his exploits during these finals.

Schillaci came on as a substitute for Andrea Carnevale in Italy's first game against Austria and promptly scored the only goal of the game. Italy cruised into the second round (with Schillaci netting against Czechoslovakia) where the Sicilian began to write his name into the record books. A glorious goal against Uruguay - a beautifully-struck shot which dipped just under the crossbar - was

followed by a quarter-final winner against a determined Ireland.

The host nation was drawn to play Argentina in the semi-final, and although Schillaci put Italy ahead in the 17th minute, the world champions equalised and won a dramatic penalty shootout.

The Italian striker put his anguish behind him to score his sixth goal of the tournament in the third-place playoff with England, and clinched the 'Golden Boot' for top scorer of the championship.



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flashback
WORLD CUP 1990

Blunder of the tournament :

Rene Higuita (Colombia)

Cameroon's 38-year old magician Roger Milla was at the heart of things as he forced Colombian goalkeeper Rene Higuita into Italia 90's most-



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flashback

Blunder of the tournament:

Rene Higuita (Colombia)

Cameroon's 38-year old magician Roger Milla was at the heart of things as he forced Colombian goalkeeper Rene Higuita into Italia 90's most-



notable personal disaster. In their second round game Milla had already given the Africans an extra-time lead with a 107th minute strike, but it was his second and clinching goal that would give Higuita nightmares for years to come. Higuita, who had gained a reputation as an eccentric, courtesy of his desire to dribble the ball upfield towards the halfway line, tried his party trick once too often and the wily Milla



dispossessed him 30 metres from goal. As the Cameroon veteran sprinted away and planted the ball gleefully into an empty net to seal victory for the underdogs, Higuita was left to reflect

on his monumental blunder. "That was a big mistake I made. It was as big as a house," said the Colombian keeper after the game. Yet the 1990 World Cup would have been poorer without Higuita's endearingly-reckless talent.

Forgettable final

West Germany gained revenge for their 1986 World Cup final defeat against Argentina by beating the world champions in a spiteful game. The Argentinians barely had a shot at goal all night and picked up an unwanted first as they tumbled to a deserved 1-0 loss. Substitute Pedro Monzon



became the first player ever sent off in a World Cup final when he clumsily brought down Jurgen Klinsmann, whose amateur theatrics deserved a card themselves. Monzon's team-mate Gustavo Dezotti later became the second player ever sent off in a World Cup final. The winning goal came in the 85th minute, appropriately enough from the penalty spot. German defender Andy Brehme coolly converted after Nestor Lorenzo was harshly adjudged to have fouled Rudi Voeller. Millions of people around the world videotaping the game hit the 'erase' button as soon as this desperately boring, cynical match ended.



What they said

"Perhaps people will now stop asking us questions about witch doctors and whether we eat monkeys, and ask instead about our football"

- Cameroon's Francois Biyick after his country's shock victory over Argentina in the opening game of Italia 90.

"Cry for me Argentina and for every football follower throughout the world. You brought shame and disgrace to what should have been a glittering showcase of all that is best about our great game"

- Scottish television pundit Ian St John on Argentina's petulant display in the World Cup final.

"I will have to tell my children that the mafia exists also in soccer. The penalty that beat us did not exist"

- Diego Maradona taking Argentina's World Cup final defeat against West Germany on the chin.



Tattoo

GREG BLAKE gets down to basics with the intrepid men and women soccer stars in Australia who dare to sport tattoos.

Forget training drills, tactics, team talks and strategies; as far as we're concerned what we present here is the genuine close-to-the-bone hidden world of the Ericsson Cup.

Art, body decoration, self mutilation; call it what you will.

But what was once the almost exclusive domain of street toughs, pool halls, wharfies and bikers is now very much in vogue, with music stars, athletes and movie stars leading a very public campaign to add respectability to the so-called arts of tattooing and body-piercing.

One of the newer, up-market tattoo

parlours is 'Splash of Colour', in Melbourne's yuppie suburb of Ascot Vale.

Their highest-profile sports star client is Olympic sprinter Shane Naylor and both the Collingwood and North Melbourne AFL players have celebrated recent premiership successes with commemorative tattoos.

"You'd be surprised at the type of people who get work done here," says owner James Brown. "Many of them in, say, the entertainment industry obviously wouldn't want me to mention who they are. But the type of customers we have has changed significantly in recent years."

Not that the stigma has disappeared completely.

For example, big tough 'Mean Dean' Anastasiadis, Carlton's man-mountain goalkeeper, has publicly revealed his below the waistline black panther for the first time

for Soccer Australia magazine.

But our exclusive showing of Dean's body work was only permitted after much soul-searching by the Blues custodian.

You see, the big fella still hasn't told his Dad that he has a tattoo and is currently living in fear of a parental cuff around the ear-hole.

Anastasiadis is just one of several Ericsson Cup stars to have undergone the pain of the needle for the sake of permanent skin decoration.

And what do the coaches think?

Certainly Anastasiadis won't have any problems with Carlton boss Eddie Krncevic, for even smooth-dressing Eddie himself has gone under the needle.

Krncevic, who sports a heart on his shoulder dedicated to wife Maggie, had his body-art done during his playing time

in Belgium.

"I won't have any more done, I love it," Krncevic says proudly.

"I dedicated it to my wife - because I love her."

And did it hurt?

"It sure bloody did," he says.

While most of the stars have tattooed discreetly in areas generally covered by clothing, in this Soccer we reveal all.

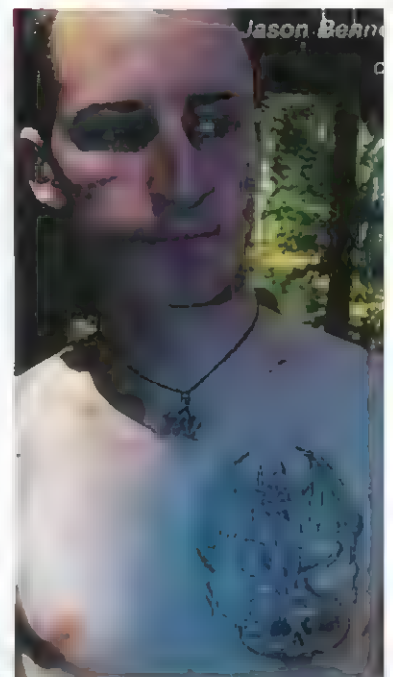
Although we don't quite boast the Ericsson Cup's answer to outrage Chicago Bulls basketball star Dennis Rodman, we do have devoted tattooists like Newcastle Breakers forward Jason Bennett and young Brisbane Strikers midfielder Jeromy Harris.

Surprisingly, Harris was not one of the host of Brisbane stars to get a

yo

commemorative championship tattoo for last season's grand final success.

According to him, the temporary tattoo would only last about five years and has a tendency to distort, smudge and fade.



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"But I do like tattoos and I always wanted one," explains



you

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Harris, who has one on his hip and an arm-band. "I certainly didn't get them to be tough, I just like the designs and I'm hoping to get more work done. There's no doubt that they are addictive.

"For me they are very personal and I'm happy with them and even though sometimes my team-mates take the piss a bit, I reckon it's because they haven't got the guts to do it themselves."

Bennett, who had his first at 19 years of age and a second done recently, says he acted on an impulse.

"I just acted on urge and got them done," he says. "They are personal things and I keep them covered - they are not for show."

Body art is certainly no longer the exclusive domain of males either, with an ever-increasing number of women taking time out at the more modern state-of-the-



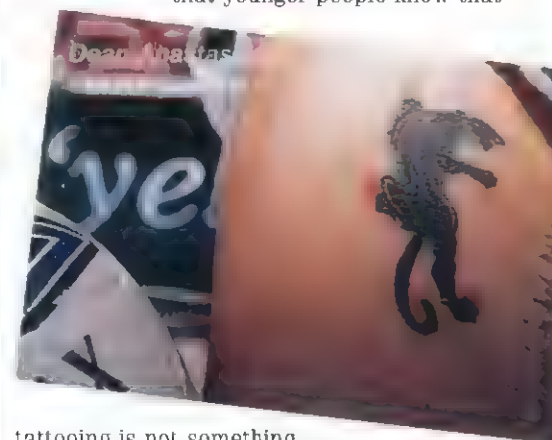
art 1990s-style tattoo parlours.

"In percentage terms, the number of women coming through our shop now has increased probably 500 per cent in the last 10 years," explained Brown. "The whole nature of the industry has changed in that time."

And some of current Aussie women stars sport some attractive ink-work.

"I think a tasteful tattoo on a woman looks great," says Harris. "Like a man, too many tattoos can look a bit average, but little tasteful designs look good."

Most importantly, every one of the soccer stars we spoke to insisted on making sure that younger people know that



tattooing is not something to be taken lightly.

A tattoo is painful and permanent and Harris insists that youngsters should wait.

"I wanted one for a long time, but I left it," he says. "When I did get one done it was small and was in a place that couldn't be seen, just in case I did regret it later."

AT 3AW WE GET BEHIND



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The Four Diegos

WARRIOR: THE PERTH GLORY; THE FOUR DIEGOS: EDDIE THOMSON, JOHN MARKOVSKI, ANDREW MARTH AND JOHN TRIMBOLI



Top 10 excuses for withdrawing from the Socceroo squad

1. "I missed my plane" - Craig Moore
2. "It won't put the Coco-Pops on the table" - Ned Zelic
3. "I'm getting married" - Ned Zelic
4. "It's like surfing for England" - Craig Johnston
5. "There's a Socceroo plot against me" - Mark Schwarzer
6. "I've got to wash my hair" - Robbie Hooker (unconfirmed)
7. "I've got to look after my dad's funeral parlour" - Alex Tobin (pure speculation)
8. "I can't get a work permit" - Zeljko Kalac (alleged)
9. "The stock market crashed" - Terry Venables (pure tabloid trash)
10. "I'm confused" - Mark Viduka

Carlton coach, trendsetter, fashion conscious, man about town Eddie Knezevic reveals his top 6 motivational tapes used to inspire his team at half-time

1. "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy" - Rod Stewart
(or "Use me as an example, boys. I've played overseas for 15 years, you know!")
2. "Boom Boom Boom Let's Go Back To My Room" - Peter Lekakis
(or "OK guys, we are having a nightmare. Let's go back to the drawing board")

3. "I'm Too Sexy" - Right Said Fred
(or "Look, guys, we are too good to be playing in this league")
4. "How Deep Is Your Love?" - Bee Gees
(or "I want you to show your commitment to this club")
5. "This Guy's In Love With You" - The Reels
(or "Don't you know that I believe in you guys?")
6. "Love Is The Drug" - Bryan Ferry
(or "Look boys, put away those anabolic steroids, and do it for each other!")

Top 10 pre-game entertainment acts at a Perth Glory home game

1. A stalker
2. A stalker singing the national anthem
3. A team of gymnastic stalkers doing a routine on the Glory jumping castle
4. A motorcade of legendary, all-time great Western Australian stalkers
5. A penalty shootout with stalkers
6. A team of stalkers in the Glorymobile doing a pantomime for the little kiddies
7. A half-time 100-metre dash with the eight fastest stalkers in Western Australia
8. Sky-diving stalkers
9. Inflatable blow-up Chicken Treat Chicken stalker dolls thrown among the crowd
10. A military tattoo of stalkers playing the bagpipes

Top 10 fictional responses from Australian soccer personalities when asked "Who or what would you be if there was no soccer?"

1. "A WWF wrestler" - former coach and 1974 Socceroo hard man, Manfred Schaefer
2. "The next Don Lane and have my own variety show" - SBS soccer presenter, Kyle Patterson
3. "An Elvis Presley impersonator" - Adelaide Sharks' Elvis lookalike, Pablo Cardozo
4. "The next Robin Williams and star in my own slapstick comedy" - bubbly Marconi coach Zoran Matic
5. "The next Joh Bjelke Petersen and form my own extreme political party" - Gippsland Falcons' controversial coach, Frank Arok
6. "A tour operator for Hiroshima Contiki Tours" - Sanfrecce Hiroshima coach and former Socceroo supremo, Eddie Thomson
7. "The captain of the Greenpeace anti-nuclear ship 'The Rainbow Warrior' or the next Basil Fawlty in a new series of 'Fawlty Towers'" - Aston Villa and Socceroo goalkeeper, Mark Bosnich
8. "The lead singer of Megadeth" - South Melbourne hard man, Paul Trimboli
9. "Paul Mercurio in 'Strictly Ballroom'" - Melbourne Knights' light-footed captain, Andrew Marth
10. "A jockey in the Melbourne Cup" - Carlton's dieling striker, John Markovski.

The Four Diegos ask the Mega-ha question to some special Socceroo



Graham Arnold

Diegos: Graham, as a striker and die by scoring goals...

Arnold: Well, I should be die by scoring goals...

Diegos: To redeem yourself...

The Four Diegos ask the Mega-hard questions to some special Soccerroos



Graham Arnold

Diegos: Graham, as a striker you live and die by scoring goals...

Arnold: Well, I should be dead then.

Diegos: To redeem yourself, is there a

goal that sticks in your mind as your favourite at international level, and which do you think is your most embarrassing moment?

Arnold: Gee, probably the best goal I've ever scored was against Korea in the final of the President's Cup in 1987.

Diegos: Actually we remember that one. You hit that very sweetly, right off the laces.

Arnold: Yeah! The biggest clanger still makes me feel pretty bad. It

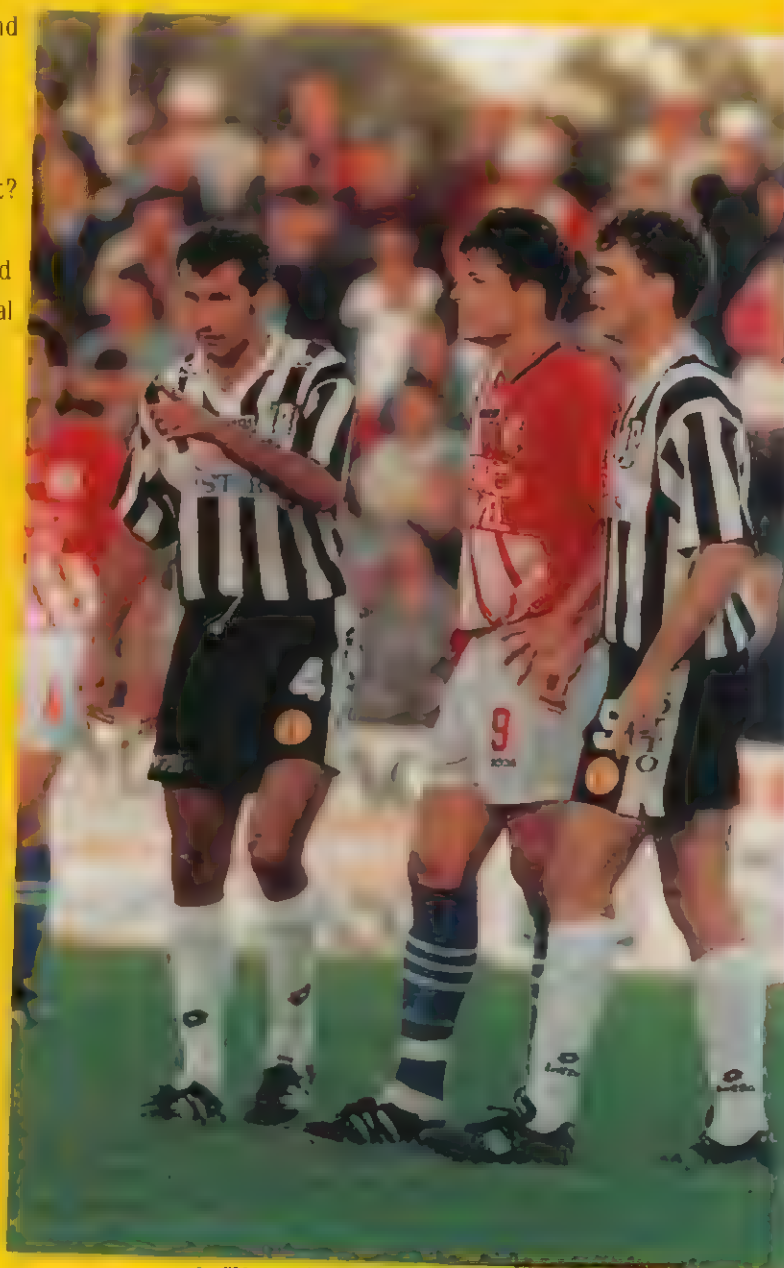
happened when I kicked the goalkeeper's head off (not literally, we hope) against Yugoslavia. I certainly wasn't proud of that moment of my career.

Diegos: But with his blond hair the goalkeeper looked very much like a soccer ball - we can understand the mistake..

Arnold: The only problem was that he didn't have 'Adidas' printed on his forehead.

Alex Tobin

Diegos: Alex, at the Socceroo World Cup camps do you get the overseas glamour boys rolling up in their Porsches and Jaguars while the home-based players like yourself turn up in your Adelaide City-



"Honestly, Mark, the Datsun 120Y is a much under-rated vehicle."

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Datsun 120Y? Do you think the overseas boys have been spoiled by their success?

Tobin: I wouldn't say spoiled, but there are definitely one or two characters who have come back different people - there's no question about that.

But happily the majority, despite what they may be earning or who they may be playing for, are generally the same Aussie guys I knew before they went. I think that's credit to them that they can go into such an environment and come back pretty well unchanged.

The Four Diegos

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 **Former world driving champion Niki Lauda was in Australia recently on a brief visit. PHILIP MICALLEF spoke to the Austrian ace about aeroplanes, Formula One and football.**

It is painfully obvious that the world of formula one still holds a prominent place in the heart of Niki Lauda, the three-time world champion who cheated death in an horrific accident in 1976.

Lauda, 48, is a pretty busy man these days. He is heavily involved with the running of his expanding airline Lauda-air which includes flying his own Boeing 777s on major routes.

He also tries to watch as many grand prix races as possible and find enough time to watch the occasional soccer match if it is of 'the highest level'.

The last match Lauda watched was in Vienna in September when Austria beat Sweden 1-0 in a crucial World Cup qualifier at the Ernst Happel Stadium.

"I was bored to death. The first half was an absolute mess," he said during a recent fleeting visit to Australia.

"Both teams hardly put a foot right and in the second Austria were lucky enough to win."

Lauda said his interest in soccer was only moderate but said he had two heroes he

looked up to.

The first was German master Franz Beckenbauer "but that was a long time ago" and the second "this young Brazilian guy I met in Barcelona".

"He doesn't speak any language but he can play very good football," he said of the prodigy Ronaldo.

Lauda was at Jerez in October for the last race of the 1997 drivers' championship when series leader Michael Schumacher cynically rammed main rival Jacques Villeneuve in a blatant bid to get both cars off the track.

Schumi's manoeuvre failed miserably and the German ace was forced to withdraw, leaving the door open for the Canadian to win his first world title.

"What Schumacher did to Villeneuve was intentional and wrong, no doubt about it," Lauda said.

"Such things will always happen in decisive races and a rule change is needed.

"Perhaps motor racing should follow soccer and adopt a 'red card' system whereby offending drivers are sent off on the spot. No arguments. No appeals."

Lauda has taken part in 171 grand prix and won 25 races, most of them for Ferrari in the mid-70s.

He won two world titles for Ferrari in 1975 and 1977 before grabbing a third with McLaren

in 1984.

Of the 25 races Lauda won, none gave him more satisfaction than that of Kyalami in South Africa in 1976.

"Tom Pryce was killed after a bad crash and when one of the marshals ran on to the circuit to put out the fire he was hit by another car and also got killed," Lauda recalls.

"And when I arrived on the scene I ran into parts of the wreckage of Pryce's Shadow car and damaged my Ferrari's front wing and oil radiator, which obviously slowed me down.

"Jody Scheckter eventually caught up with me but I said to myself 'He's not going to pass me, I have been through worse things in my life'.

"So I fought the race with a badly damaged car, having no brakes for the last 10 minutes and I crossed the finish line just before my engine blew up."

Lauda, who is married with two children, now earns part of his living by flying planes all over the world in the blissful solitude one gets at 10,000m above sea level.

"Yes, flying planes is much easier than driving formula one cars," he says.

"In a plane you go by the rules and you have a route to follow so it's much safer. On a racing track there are no rules, there is no safety and you have to win." ■

Lauda





Portsmouth's

Aus



John Aloisi and Craig Foster - part of the Australian connection at Portsmouth

Aussie fleet

It is no secret that Australian players are making a huge impact in Europe these days, but English first division side Portsmouth is the first club to sign Aussies en masse. NIGEL TURNER of BBC Radio examines the birth of the "Pompeyroos".

Portsmouth manager Terry Fenwick, the former Queens Park Rangers, Tottenham and England defender, made a much-publicised shopping trip to Australia during the last close season looking for recruits for the first division club. He went home happy having snapped up four Aussies to boost his squad at Fratton Park.

The four who took the chance to try life in the Nationwide League were: Robbie Enes (Sydney United), Hamilton Thorp (Adelaide Sharks), John Aloisi (Cremonese) and Craig Foster (Marconi). Now Fenwick is predicting that other English managers will be following his example and bringing their cheque books to sign up top Australian talent.

"It was inevitable that English clubs would eventually look to Australia because the prices of players elsewhere in the world are so high," says Fenwick, who was appointed team manager at Pompey by Socceroos' World Cup coach, Terry Venables, who has guided his career from their days together at QPR and Tottenham.

"Previously, English managers were put off by the distance and the fact that there wasn't a properly-established professional league," says Fenwick who sees signs that the game might be set for take-off in Australia.

"Once there is proper TV coverage it will spotlight the game in Australia. At the moment managers are reluctant to make that sort of journey just for two or three

games in the summer."

But when your chairman is the Aussie coach, Fenwick admits it is much easier to get permission to go!

"Terry Venables persuaded me to take a look and it was easier for me as I was able to watch three or four international matches and took on board the semi-final and grand final at the end of the season."

John Aloisi has made the biggest impact so far thanks to his early season goalscoring exploits in England. By early-December he already had eight league goals to his name despite Portsmouth struggling at the foot of the table.

"I think that, at only 21, he is an amazing talent," says Fenwick who was himself good enough to earn 20 caps for England during his playing career

"He's got a good eye for goal. He is an intelligent footballer and although he has a great deal to learn, he will be an excellent buy for us. He has so much in his repertoire already, he just needs to come to terms with the pace of the game in England.

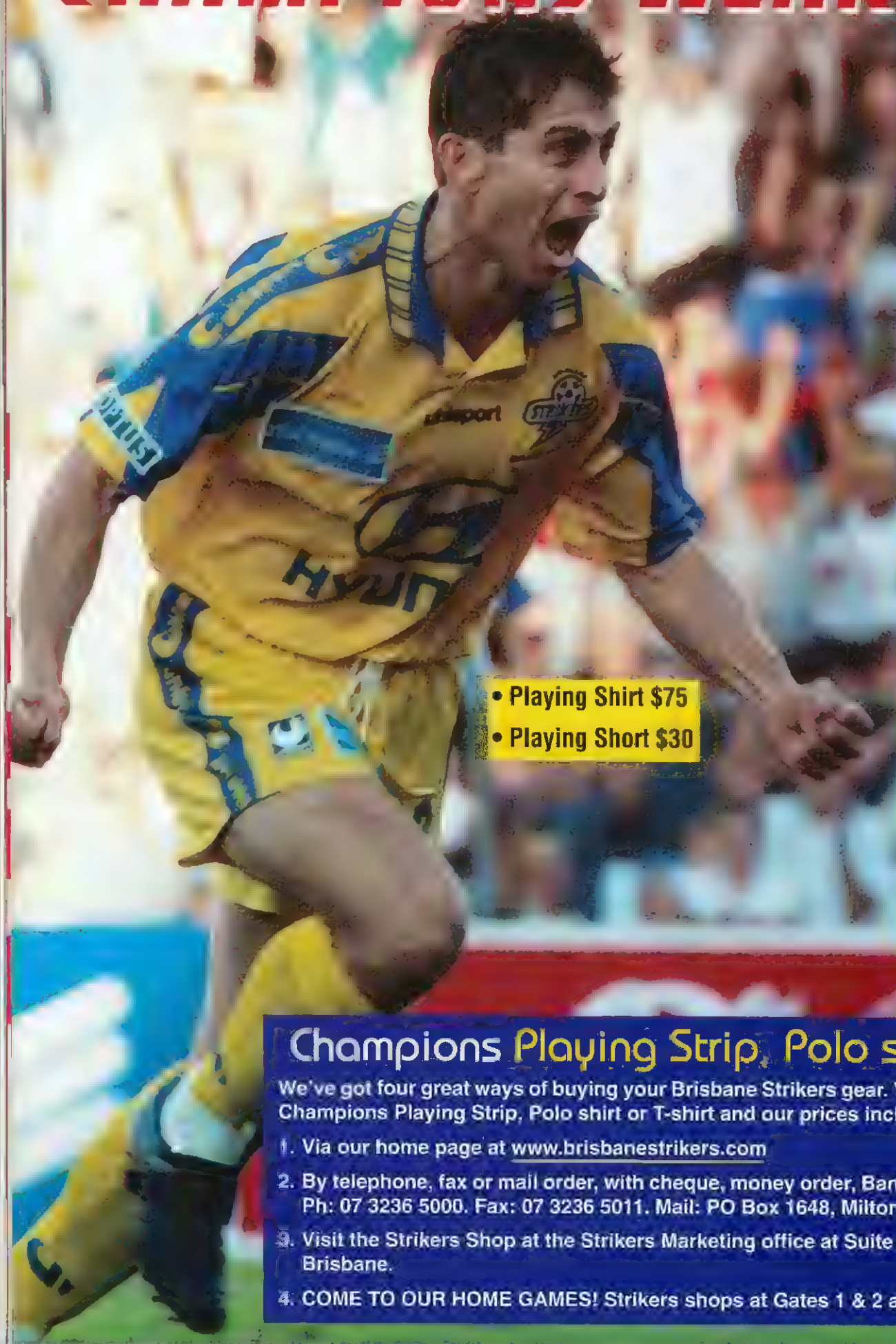
"Both Robbie Enes and Craig Foster had been a target for quite some time. As with Zeljko Kalac, we had problems with work permits and we had Robbie here for nearly three months before he was allowed to play. I think he is also catching up with match fitness and getting used to the pace.

"That can be said of Craig as well. He needs to get used to the rigours of our game that he hasn't come across before. But both will be excellent additions to our squad."

Fenwick is not suggesting that Aussies are not tough enough. It is more that, at home, there is time to recover from matches every Sunday. In England, with midweek matches coming thick and fast throughout the winter, the little knocks



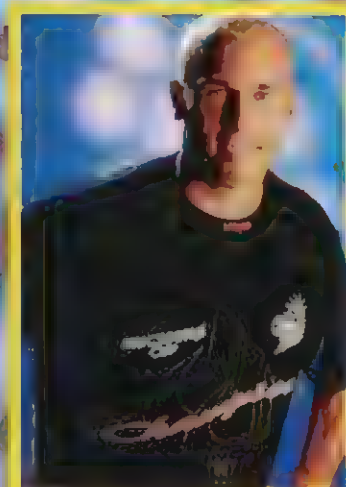
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Portsmouth's Aussie fleet

and bruises get no time to heal, prepare for the next game.

"I think the English game is unbelievably quick now and getting quicker. And look at teams like Manchester United who can sustain long periods of time. You see how close you get and get at you - passing is one or two touches - British football is so fast it's unbelievable."

So how can Australian clubs improve their standard to enable them to hold on to their players? Fenwick believes the talent to Europe is bound to come in the short term.

"Until television gets involved the problem will remain, but the signs it might change. As I understand the crowds and TV audiences for League (rugby league) have been more than expected while soccer crowds are increasing."

"So if soccer can get some TV coverage it would start to provide the resources needed by the clubs to attract their better players and even bring in two overseas players in."

"The stadiums are lovely, the atmosphere is fantastic and they just need the finance to make the clubs viable."

Of the four players signed by Portsmouth, Fenwick admits Hamilton was a bit of a gamble, but he believes that with Thorp's physical presence in the air, he was worth the risk.

"He is incredible in the air - a big guy, leaps very well. We tend to think that big players are not natural but Hamilton certainly is. He hits headers so well and he's got goals and has been scoring a lot of goals in a short period of time that he has been here."

It would have been five years ago if Zeljko Kalac's work permit had not been blocked by the British authorities.

Portsmouth's Aussie fleet

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"I think the English game is unbelievably quick now and getting quicker. And look at teams like Manchester United who can sustain it for long periods of time. You see how they close you down and get at you quick. The passing is one or two touch – British football is so fast it's unbelievable."

So how can Australian clubs catch up and improve their standard to perhaps enable them to hold on to their better players? Fenwick believes the drain of talent to Europe is bound to continue in the short term.

"Until television gets more involved the problem will remain, but there are signs it might change. As I understand it, the crowds and TV audiences for Super League (rugby league) have been poorer than expected while soccer crowds are increasing.

"So if soccer can get some TV coverage it would start to provide the resources needed by the clubs to keep their better players and even bring one or two overseas players in.

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"He is incredible in the air and, for a big guy, leaps very well. We tend to find that big players are not natural jumpers, but Hamilton certainly is. He times his headers so well and he's got good touch and has been scoring a lot of goals in the short period of time that he has been here."

It would have been five recruits if Zeljko Kalac's work permit had not been blocked by the British authorities but, at

From the terraces

What do the Portsmouth fans think of the Aussie invasion of the English south coast? We went straight to the source and asked Pompey fanatic, Tony Hardy.

"The fans have really taken to the Aussies. I've seen quite a few wearing hats with corks at Pompey matches and there's usually a rousing chorus of Waltzing Matilda from the terraces during the warm-up.

"Even John Anthony Portsmouth Football Club Westwood (a Portsmouth legend, he has changed his name by deed poll. He hasn't missed a game for 15 years and he always takes a bell and bugle to every game) has learnt to "play" Waltzing Matilda on the bugle! "Aloisi is a very classy player. He has an excellent first touch, good positional sense and the ability to run at defenders. He's also a good finisher.

"I also like the look of Thorp but I'm afraid he is being underused. He's very fast - unusual for a big player - and strong, and is also surprisingly skilful."

the time of writing, Fenwick was confident that Portsmouth would sort through the red tape and add the goalkeeper to the player's roster at Fratton Park.

Even though Portsmouth have been struggling, Fenwick has seen enough of his Aussie recruits to be on the look-out for more talent down under.

"At under-16 and under-21 level Australia is ranked in the world's top six, so obviously at those age groups they are doing something right! But once the players get past that there is not really the right platform for them to progress yet."

In the meantime, as Portsmouth continue to struggle against the threat of relegation and Fenwick resists calls for him to resign, the Aussie revolution at Fratton Park looks set to continue.



The return

of



The John Markovski weight-l phenomenon is one of the gr Aussie soccer stories of rece. In another of his series of on ones with the characters of Australian soccer, GREG BLA tackled the man known as 'J

Then slender as a string-bean, of John Markovski was lunched - s launched - some dozen years ago, shy, skinny kid with the most auda talent played senior national leagu at the tender age of 15 years.

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of big John



The John Markovski weight-loss phenomenon is one of the great Aussie soccer stories of recent years. In another of his series of one-on-ones with the characters of Australian soccer, GREG BLAKE tackled the man known as 'Jonesy'.

Then slender as a string-bean, the career of John Markovski was launched - sorry, launched - some dozen years ago, when a shy, skinny kid with the most audacious talent played senior national league football at the tender age of 15 years.

His precocious abilities have always been uncloistered by the bounds of orthodoxy, but over the span of a league record seven different clubs his gifted match-winner reputation has been gradually replaced by a more sombre unfulfilled genius tag.

Much of that has been due to a media-inspired preoccupation with his weight. His career-defining moments have come more often at the pre-season weigh-in rather than on the paddock, where he can still rip any team apart with moments of sheer artistry.

At one point in his career it appeared a matter of when and not if his once more than substantial backside would demolish the stitching in back of his shorts. Fair or

foul, his questionable fitness has cost him what most consider should have been an extended career as a Socceroo starter.

But at 27, 'Big John', as the Carlton fans have dubbed him, has forsaken fries for fitness and shakes for security of tenure at the glitziest and most glamorous new club in the Ericsson Cup family.

In his first run for Carlton this season svelte Johnny looked decidedly out of condition. "For Christ's sake, let the poor bastard eat," bellowed one terrace wit.

Thankfully, things have improved markedly since for the enigmatic and charismatic former teen sensation. His fitness is beyond question, his figure fantastic and his form has at times been explosive, like the day he single-handedly blew Adelaide City out of Optus Oval. The skinny kid is back in business.

I sat down with what is left of 'Jonesy' over a skim milk and cottage cheese recently.

GB - No fat jokes?

JM - Not if you want to live.

GB - Good point. John. I was thinking back to the first time I met you and I actually recall doing an interview with a shy, spindly-looking 15-year-old kid in the back seat of a car at the old Chaplin Reserve (then home ground of ex-NSL club Sunshine George Cross). Do you remember much about that period?

JM - Well, obviously I would have been shy. I do remember that period, though. It was a bit strange, being that young and getting all that attention from reporters.

GB - Now here we are, more than 10 years later, and you're as thin as a whip again. You would have to be a fool not to know that your playing weight has been a talking point for years and here you are,

you look fantastic.

JM - Yeah, well I was skinny when I was 15, running around everywhere and it really has been great to get back into shape again. The last three years, through injury and so on, have been difficult, but I'm just happy now that I'm working hard and training twice a day and getting back into shape.

GB - Are you on a 'Big Mac' incentive? If you make the finals will Carlton let you have a pig-out?

JM - Not really. Look, I'm just happy to be out there playing. It doesn't really bother me, 'Big Mac' or no 'Big Mac'. It's not like I was going to Macca's (McDonald's) beforehand...

GB - But that has been a good running gag over the years.

JM - Yeah, a few of the guys were saying that about Macca's and stuff like that.

GB - But what did happen, was it 'Jenny Craig' or something like that, because the change has been remarkable?

JM - I got to Carlton and they gave me a reason to come down (in weight). They said they knew what I was about and they gave me the chance there and being full-time with (coach) Eddie Krncevic, (assistant coach) Fab (Incantalupo) and (fitness advisor) Darren Welsh there on the coaching staff it was just great. Sweating it out twice a day makes a difference. They've been terrific.

GB - Were you Darren's biggest challenge?

JM - I think so - probably.

GB - Are you happier?

JM - Well, we've been doing well this season and obviously I'm going to be happy if that continues.

GB - Want a cheeseburger?

JM - What?



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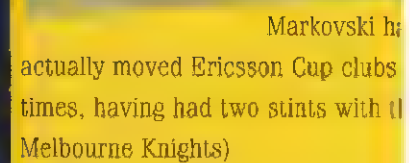
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JM - Not really. I mean, I was George Cross for a certain amount, and I was grateful that they gave me a chance (Editor's note - Markovski is the youngest player to appear in a final he played for Sunshine in a 1986 elimination final at just 15).

I was still only 18 when I went to Marconi, the 'Rolls Royce' club of A

The return of big John

GB - Sorry, just thought I'd catch you off guard. Anyway, seven clubs - more than any other player ever (I couldn't bring myself to use 'more clubs than Tiger Woods')...

JM - Yes, a few of the guys have pointed that out to me.

GB - When you set out all those years ago did you ever consider that you would end up being the sort of wayward journeyman that you are? (Editor's note -

But I got homesick and I came back and was on the move again. I never really intended to move around that much, I thought I'd be at a couple of clubs and then retire. Then there I am at 26 and I've been around so much that people are starting to ask me when I am going to retire.

GB - More to the point, being still so young, how many more clubs can you get through before you finish?

JM - Well there aren't too many left are there?

GB - Was 15 too young to start?

JM - I wouldn't say too young. I enjoyed everything about playing for the highest level in Australia at that age and I'm still grateful that George Cross gave me that chance.

I mean I didn't even play a youth game with George Cross and just went straight into the senior team. It is every youngster's dream that they do get that chance, and when they do they have to grab it. I was lucky to get that chance at 15.

GB - You are a freak.

Sometimes you just do stuff that can take my breath away. In one game recently you were red-hot against Adelaide City and couldn't do a thing wrong. You were

more things. Against Adelaide the ball was virtually like a magnet and everywhere I went the ball seemed to come my way.

GB - Do you ever know in advance that



Markovski has actually moved Ericsson Cup clubs eight times, having had two stints with the Melbourne Knights)

JM - Not really. I mean, I was at George Cross for a certain amount of time and I was grateful that they gave me the chance (Editor's note - Markovski is still the youngest player to appear in a final, when he played for Sunshine in a 1986 elimination final at just 15).

I was still only 18 when I went to Marconi, the 'Rolls Royce' club of Australia.

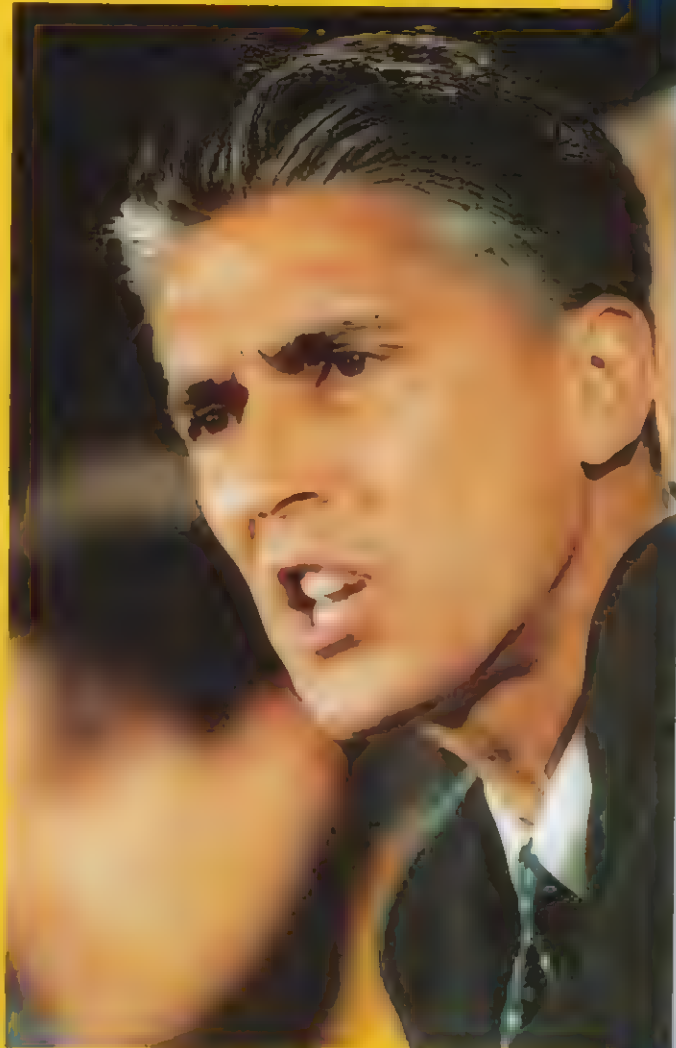
special. Two weeks later (against the Knights) you weren't in it and all you managed to do was tattoo the poor young goalkeeper's shoulder with your foot and you eventually got dragged by Eddie.

Is that your career in a nut-shell, is it that John Markovski is either special or he stinks?

JM - There's no in-between. I mean, obviously I'm going to go out there all the time trying to do whatever I can do, and the more involved you get and the more touches you get then obviously you're going to do

you're just going to have one of those special days?

JM - It's not a matter of if I know,



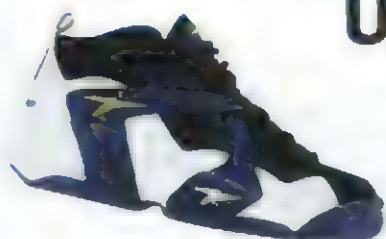
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because if I did I'd be going down and making bets. It's just one of those things.

GB - How come some fans (who remain nameless for fear of them hating you too) hate you so much?

JM - I'm not sure.

GB - Yes you are.

JM - I do cop a lot of stick from clubs and it is part of the game and I quite enjoy it.

GB - OK, these days you do look quite handsome and quite gorgeous, but you are still a bit of a man. In 'The Age' after the Adelaide game you were referred to as 'Big John', was that a reference to former Carlton AFL leggie John Nicholls. Once again you're already being compared to a figure at another club.

JM - When they're trying to compare you to some legend that used to go to Princes Park (the previous identity of the Oval) I thought it was a little bit far. I mean I'm being compared to one of the legends that have come out of Carlton here I am, I've just rocked up and I'm playing soccer and they're calling me 'John'.

GB - Do you like being a cult figure?

JM - Doesn't everyone?

GB - How the hell would I know?

JM - Everyone enjoys the attention.

GB - You always have been a bit of a cult figure, haven't you?

JM - Whether at 15 or 27, as I am now, I have got a big build.

GB - I know you are not a malicious person, but being that big you can put a big hurt on people. Just recently you put out (Knights goalkeeper) Joe Didulica. Remember once when you played for Carlton against South Melbourne at Middle Park, you fell on Mike Vukobratovic and you damned near killed him. His face was purple when you dragged you off him. Do you ever feel you want to turn around and say sorry to these poor bastards?

JM - I reckon Joey (Didulica) never got an academy award. He looked like he was dying, rolling around in there. But he was there and I've sort of just gone on and collected the ball...

GB - But that's what I mean. I'm not malicious, but if a bloke your size hits

because if I did I'd be going down and making bets. It's just one of those things.

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GB - OK, these days you do look svelte and quite gorgeous, but you are still a big man. In 'The Age' after the Adelaide game you were referred to as 'Big John', with a reference to former Carlton AFL legend John Nicholls. Once again you're already the cult figure at another club.

JM - When they're trying to compare you to some legend that used to go around Princes Park (the previous identity of Optus Oval) I thought it was a little bit freaky. I mean I'm being compared to one of the legends that have come out of Carlton and here I am, I've just rocked up and I'm playing soccer and they're calling me 'Big John'.

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GB - But that's what I mean. There is no malice, but if a bloke your size hits

someone, they stay hit.

JM - The position I play in as striker, the defenders really get stuck into me. I mean they give it and I like to dish it out as well and let them know I'm around.

GB - We always say that you could have been anything, but at 27 there is not that huge time window open for your footballing future. What are your goals now?

JM - To do well at Carlton and certainly being able to play professionally has given me a big buzz. Now that I'm a family man I've settled down a bit, so my first priority is Carlton and then maybe get a call up with the Socceroos, because I'd certainly love another chance to wear the green and gold shirt.

GB - Do you wish you might have been more diligent career-wise and played more with the Socceroos and perhaps have succeeded overseas?

JM - Obviously every player's dream is to represent their country and I would not say no if they gave me the call. I'm still a youngster in relative terms at 27 and I should have three to five years yet. I'd love to wear the green and gold again and, don't get me wrong, I still wouldn't mind shooting off overseas if the opportunity arose and get into the big bucks like some of those other guys.

GB - No thoughts of settling up a John Markovski

clinic for weight loss? I can see it now - bumper stickers on cars which read 'Lose Weight Now, Ask Jonesy How'.

JM - Sounds like a good idea. There was a bit of talk about it at the club. 'Gloria Marshall' or one of those mobs were actually at a game recently and the boys said that it was because of me they were actually interested in sponsoring Carlton.

GB - On reflection, are you happy with what you've achieved. Do you sit around and contemplate what might have been or do you think 'hell, I've done alright'?

JM - I'm happy with my career. Playing for 13 seasons and you see all the 18 or 19 year-old boys trying to get in now, really I'm wrapped with what I've been able to do. I'm happy with what I've achieved in my life.

GB - And you love Carlton?

JM - Yeah

GB - You've got plenty to compare the club to, so is Carlton the best

involved with?

JM - Of all the clubs I've been at, there is no comparison.

(Editor's final note - Markovski should know, his Ericsson Cup career started with Sunshine and he has since played with Preston, Melbourne Knights, Marconi, Gippsland, Knights again, Canberra Cosmos and his current club, Carlton)



The dream is gone...

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but the dream lives on

The France 98 dream is gone and pessimism and depression are understandable. That the Socceroos played such fluid, dynamic football in the opening 75 minutes almost makes it worse, because you could imagine our intrepid Aussies causing a few surprises at the World Cup if we'd only held out at 2-0 for the final quarter of an hour.

But the fact is that there are some strands of consolation to be grasped in the aftermath of such disappointment, although at the moment they don't make any of us feel much better.

Eighty-five thousand people in the MCG cauldron, and four million people around the country, witnessed a soccer exhibition from the Australian team which will surely live long in their memory.

Ask an Aussie sports fan in 12 months time what he or she remembers about the Iran game, and although the odd cynic will talk about the Socceroos choking, most fans will recall the incredible atmosphere created by a packed MCG passionately singing 'Advance Australia Fair', or they'll remember the scintillating opening 10 minutes when Australia might have scored six times, or they'll reflect on the sublime skills of Stan Lazaridis, Harry Kewell and Mark Bosnich.

These memories won't die, and although it's a tragedy that this Socceroo lineup won't get to pits its skills against the footballing elite in France next year, the likes of Lazaridis, Kewell, Bosnich, Paul Okon, Mark Viduka etc give us real hope of becoming a world force in years to come.

These players are only going to get better, and if

Soccer Australia can commit Asia to allowing the Socceroos to become more involved in their continental competitions in the next couple of years, our soccer prospects will surely improve.

Elimination from France 98 is a bitter pill to swallow and it feels like the end of the world, as did our demise against Israel and Argentina in the two previous campaigns.

But, as ever, you live to fight another day, and at least this time around we can see that the quality of players emerging from this country is the equal of almost any other nation on Earth.

It's only a matter of time before our Holy Grail is attained. It isn't much consolation right now, perhaps, but World Cup qualification will be all the sweeter when it is finally achieved. Roll on 2002...



The newspaper headline said 'The Dream is Dead' and I couldn't drag my eyes away from the words. I'd managed to avoid newspapers for the whole of that awful Sunday because I couldn't, wouldn't, be confronted with the horrible, gut-wrenching truth

It was as if hiding from the hard reality of the journalists' copy would keep the memory of last night's game in its rightful place; a nightmare, of the type that wakes you up suddenly in the middle of the night in a cold sweat but goes away by morning.

Oh, they were happy times in the game, the ecstasy before the agony, when it seemed so easy and right, when 23 years of disappointment were slowly being lifted from my shoulders.

Many of the fans may have been AFL supporters borrowed for the night, but they were playing a different tune and the chorus from thousands of voices was "here we go."

The bloke sitting across from me in the transit lounge has a strange desolate look in his eyes, he's staring straight ahead, but at nothing. I've seen that empty look before, on hundreds of blank, expressionless faces outside the MCG last night, on the streets of Melbourne today and in the mirror this morning.

I took a pocket sized radio into the match and tuned in not long after Aurelio Vidmar slotted home Australia's second goal and the commentator was talking excitedly, not of qualification for France, but of the very real possibility that the Socceroos would figure in the second round of the finals.

It was simply because the Australian boys were playing a superior game in every respect and

A young boy walks past me in the lounge, trailing his dad, clutching an Australian flag and proudly wearing a Socceroos cap. I wondered whether last night, he might drag his father to a match between UTS Olympic and but the pessimist inside me said th

live game of football that kid will see
be until the rugby league season re-

In truth, Azizi pounced like the accomplished player that he is, but the moment seemed to last forever. It was enough time in those few seconds to think about how cruel sport could be, how foolish I'd been not to respect the referee. I'd never looked at the linesman in the past, and now, seeing his flag raised, I didn't see t

never end

were displaying the skill and class we'd always known they possessed. So in the end, after the unthinkable happened, it was shock which hit the hardest - pure disbelieving shock.

A young boy walks past me in the transit lounge, trailing his dad, clutching an Australian flag and proudly wearing a Socceroos cap. I wondered whether, after last night, he might drag his father along to a match between UTS Olympic and Marconi, but the pessimist inside me said the next

Everything moved in a ghastly slow-mo, like one of those super-slow replays of a vicious Shane Warne leg break as it drifts past the groping blade of a hapless batsman.

live game of football that kid will see won't be until the rugby league season resumes.

I don't know how other people around me felt, but I could swear the second Iranian goal occurred in slow motion. An innocuous ball from the right hand side and there, somehow, was Azizi. Everything moved in a ghastly slow mo, like one of those super-slow replays of a vicious Shane Warne leg break as it drifts past the groping blade of a hapless batsman.

In truth, Azizi pounced like the accomplished player that he is, but to me the moment seemed to last forever. There was enough time in those few seconds to think about how cruel sport could be and how foolish I'd been not to respect that. I never looked at the linesman in the hope of seeing his flag raised. I didn't see the point,

I was sitting in a bar off Little Bourke Street immediately after the game and a friend of a friend thought he'd help me through my comatose state of grief. His idea of therapy was to sit back and say, oracle-like, "I know how you feel, it's just like when Collingwood lose a grand-final. You know I actually cried once."

I had the urge to jump over the bar table and turn him into another victim of mindless soccer violence, but I didn't want commercial television news to have the satisfaction of later saying, "We thought this would happen!"

After a few more beers, my long-time soccer buddy came up with a compelling equation that forced me to order something stronger. "Let's say we both live to 80," he said. "In that time Australia will have only 12 more chances to make the World Cup."

We agreed that was alarmingly few, considering six opportunities had already passed us by (Needless to say Collingwood will have 48 more chances to win the flag - I rest my case).

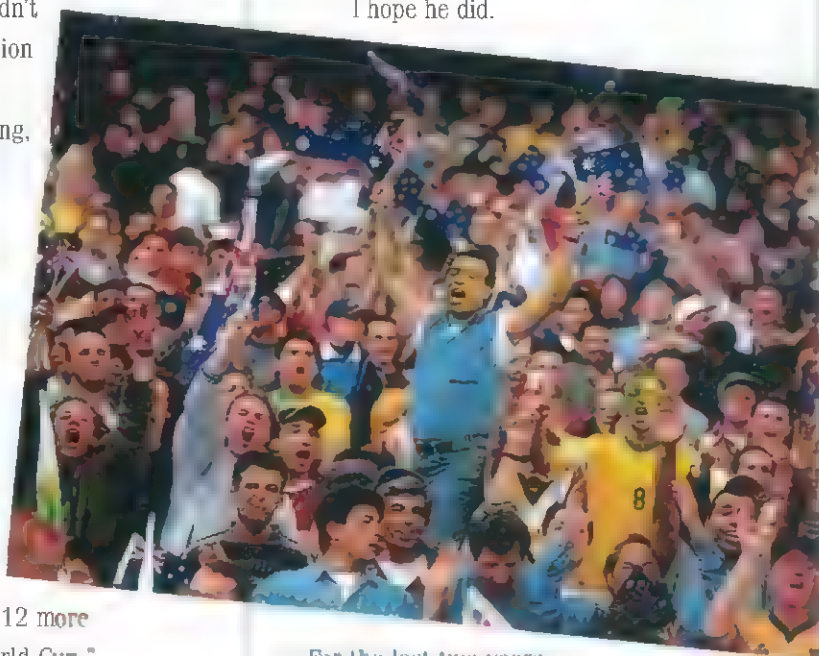
As we left the transit lounge and boarded the Qantas jet I was hoping to sit away from grieving soccer fans, because I'd decided it was time to move on. Toni had been a power of strength in carrying me through the day and I was ready to repay her by enjoying a comfortable journey home having put the bad stuff behind me.

Instead, I was placed next to my sorrowful friend with the vacant stare. So we both sat there mentally replaying Azizi in slow motion and cursing the idiot who'd first dreamed up the tactic of an off-side trap.

Oh, and the plane didn't crash, so there was some good news.

As the Iranian team did a lap of honour around the MCG basking in their success but still trying to figure out how it happened, a policeman stood guard over my man of the match Stan Lazaridis, who lay on his back and looked as if he'd decided to spend the night on that grassy spot. I wondered whether the officer had any words of comfort for Stan.

I hope he did.



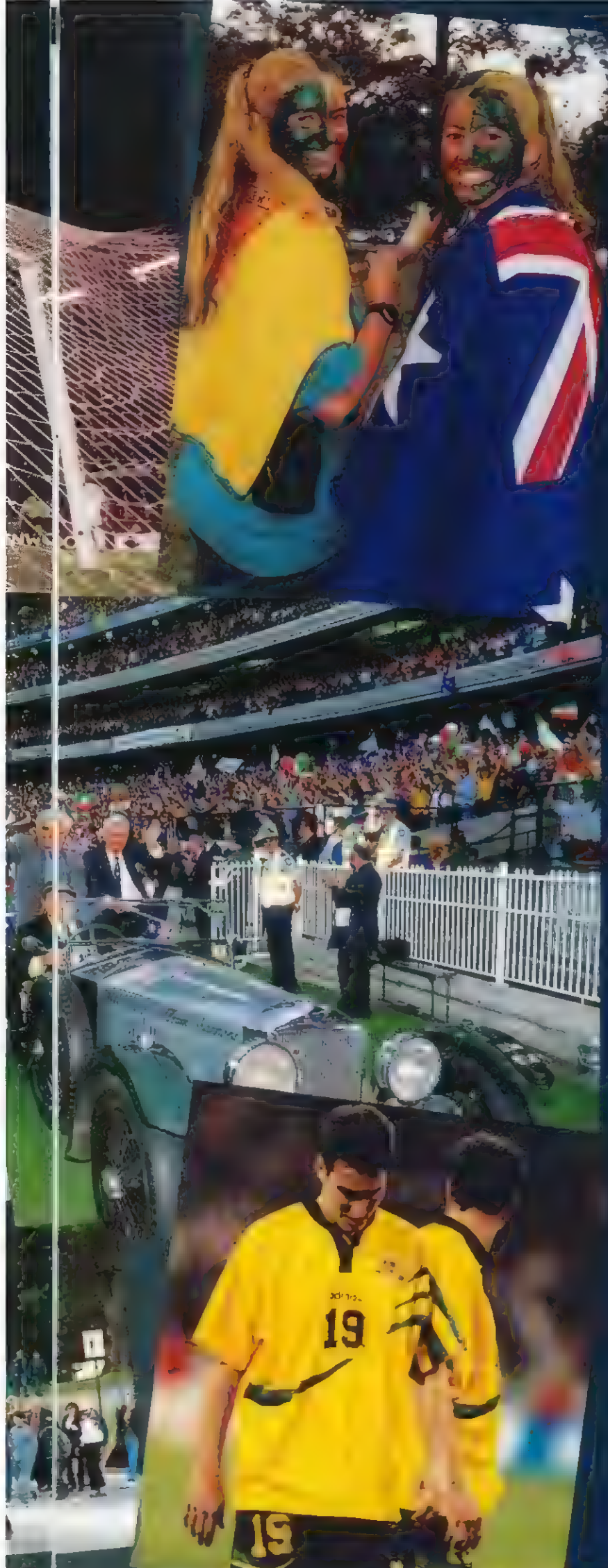
For the last two years,

during quiet periods at work, I'd doodle on scraps of paper drawing up teams of Socceroo possibles and probables, keeping an eye on the injury and selection fortunes of our foreign legion and speculating on what players, if any, from the national league would force their way into the squad.

It would be easy just to give that all up and find a real dream, one that has a remote chance of coming true. But, amongst the ruins, the rebuilding process began again in that cosy bar off Little Bourke Street. Confronted with the knowledge that, God willing, we have a maximum of 12 more chances to qualify for the Cup, my soccer buddy and I began early preparations for the next campaign

There's not a moment to be lost.





Turn the lights out

Greg Blake vents his spleen at an unfair world and an unfair World Cup.

By the time you read this the current model Socceroos are yesterday's news - gone, history; today's front-page headline is tomorrow's fish and chip wrapping.

That thought traumatises me almost as much as the MCG result (I still cannot think of that game in terms of a defeat) did.

You see, the nature of a publication such as this is that there is a delay time between the written word becoming the published item; thus the Soccer Australia editor insisted that I collect my thoughts and consider how the MCG game would be perceived some weeks after the initial shock had dulled.

I did, and there was still no silver lining, no matter how far down the track I looked.

By the time you read this the Socceroos and El Tel will be publicly dead in the water; as extinct as the dodo bird; forgotten, except in specialist soccer publications like this one.

This wound is a serious one

For one week my sometimes cricket-playing buddy, whose only knowledge of the world game came compliments of this one match, lived and breathed soccer - Robbie Slater, what a guy - and by the black Monday afterwards the whole event and Aussie soccer with it had been consigned to the never-to-be-given credibility file again.

I have never before been witness to anything quite as grand as marvellous Melbourne's romantic dalliance with the Socceroos. I fear we shall never see the likes of it again.

Thus, I cannot find forgiveness in my heart - at least not yet. I need a scapegoat.

'You bastards,' is still all I can come up with.

I'm dirty on Hill and Venables and co., for ever getting my hopes up in the first place.

As for Sandor Puhl, the referee, what about the penalty to Viduka, and how about adding ALL the second-half stoppage time?

I never want to see Steve Horvat's 'statue of liberty' impression again; the vision of him sticking his pinky up and hoping for an offside call as the blow-fly Azizi slices through Australia's last line of defence and goes one-on-one with Bosnich still haunts my dreams.

It's easy to despise that moron who charged



out to rip at the goal net; half of Australia is dirty on him.

Would it not be appropriate that he be guest of honour at the next Socceroo training camp, just to gauge how much his animal rights stance has altered the consciousness of our Aussie heroes?

I find it easy to point the finger at FIFA, for its continued impotence on the issue of blatant time-wasting tactics, and the unnerving blind eye it turns to modern technology.

One look at the scoreboard replay would have told Puhl, as it did 85,000 others at the game, that Iran's stringbean keeper Ahmedzadeh was pulling for an AFL award as he produced his dying sheep routine after the laughable 'challenge' by Harry Kewell.

Our Harry got booked and thus fizzled out of the game thereafter, with the big stick man left laughing all the way to France.

And what about wonder-boy Bagheri, whose disregard for anything remotely resembling football should have had him booked five times in the first half?

To make matters worse he was otherwise invisible for most of the game before a clearly off-side play set him up for a goal to breath some life into the dying Iranian World Cup campaign.

And I can't help but unleash some vitriol against the wretched journalist who decided very early on this year that the proverbial 'drover's dog' could have taken us to France.

Good one, stupid.

I hate 'Arnie' for trying so damned hard and giving us hope when really the jig was up and I hate every one of the 85,000 who turned up at the MCG who has never been to an Ericsson Cup game before or since.

And I hate the Socceroos for being so damned good, leaving us all with merely an academic interest in next year's finals when we all know we would have bloody well kicked some ass in France next year.

I'm shirty on me too, for crying at the national anthem and crying when we scored and crying again when the final whistle went and not stopping for another day or so, like everyone else who realised that this was more than just a game.

Turn the lights out and shut the door on your way out, because this World Cup party is over for the Aussies and we may never get the chance to see such a bash again. ■

World


SAINT-DENIS
Stade de France
PARIS
Parc des Princes
LENS
Stade Felix-Bollaert
LYON
Stade de Gerland
SAINT-ETIENNE
Stade Geoffroy-Guichard
MARSEILLE
Stade Municipal
MONTPELLIER
Stade de La Mosson
TOULOUSE
Stadium Municipal
BORDEAUX
Stade Lescure
NANTES
Stade de La Beaujoire
TOTAL GAMES
**Wed
10/06**
A1

Brazil

A2

Scotland

GROUP A
1. BRAZIL
2. SCOTLAND
3. MOROCCO
4. NORWAY
G
1.
2.
3.
4.

YOUR GUIDE TO THE WORLD'S BIGGEST EVENT

World Cup

the road to France

CALENDAR OF THE 16th FOOT



FIRST ROUND

	Wed 10/06	Thur 11/06	Fri 12/06	Sat 13/06	Sun 14/06	Mon 15/06	Tues 16/06	Wed 17/06	Thur 18/06	Fri 19/06	Sat 20/06	Sun 21/06	Mon 22/06
SAINT-DENIS <i>Stade de France</i>	A1 Brazil vs A2 Scotland			E1 Holland vs E2 Belgium					C1 France vs C3 Saudi Arabia				
PARIS <i>Parc des Princes</i>						F1 Germany vs F2 USA				D2 Nigeria vs D4 Bulgaria		H1 Argentina vs H3 Jamaica	
LENS <i>Stade Felix-Bollaert</i>			C3 Saudi Arabia vs C4 Denmark		H3 Jamaica vs H4 Croatia							F1 Germany vs F3 Yugoslavia	
LYON <i>Stade de Gerland</i>				E3 Sth Korea vs E4 Mexico		G1 Romania vs G2 Colombia						F2 USA vs F4 Iran	
SAINT-ETIENNE <i>Stade Geoffroy-Guichard</i>					F3 England vs F4 Iran			B2 Chile vs B4 Austria		D1 Spain vs D3 Paraguay			
MARSEILLE <i>Stade Municipal</i>			C1 France vs C2 Sth Africa			G3 England vs G4 Tunisia					E1 Holland vs E3 Sth Korea		
MONTPELLIER <i>Stade de La Mosson</i>	A3 Morocco vs A4 Norway		D3 Paraguay vs D4 Bulgaria					B1 Italy vs B3 Cameroon					G2 Colombia vs G4 Tunisia
TOULOUSE <i>Stadium Municipal</i>		B3 Cameroon vs B4 Austria			H1 Argentina vs H2 Japan				C2 South Africa vs C4 Denmark				G1 Romania vs G3 England
BORDEAUX <i>Stade Lescure</i>		B1 Italy vs B2 Chile					A2 Scotland vs A4 Norway				E2 Belgium vs E4 Mexico		
NANTES <i>Stade de La Beaujoire</i>				D1 Spain vs D2 Nigeria			A1 Brazil vs A3 Morocco				H2 Japan vs H4 Croatia		
TOTAL GAMES	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	2

48 Games in 17 Days

GROUP A

1. BRAZIL
2. SCOTLAND
3. MOROCCO
4. NORWAY

GROUP B

1. ITALY
2. CHILE
3. CAMEROON
4. AUSTRIA

GROUP C

1. FRANCE
2. SOUTH AFRICA
3. SAUDI ARABIA
4. DENMARK

GROUP D

1. SPAIN
2. NIGERIA
3. PARAGUAY
4. BULGARIA

BALL WORLD CUP - FRANCE '98



TOYOTA

For

				ROUND OF SIXTEEN				QUARTER FINALS		SEMI FINALS		FINALS	
Tue 23/06	Wed 24/06	Thur 25/06	Fri 26/06	Sat 27/06	Sun 28/06	Mon 29/06	Tues 30/06	Fri 03/07	Sat 04/07	Tue 07/07	Wed 08/07	Sat 11/07	Sun 12/07
B1 Italy vs B4 Austria			G1 Romania vs G4 Tunisia		1D vs 2C = 4			2 vs 3 = B			B vs D = D2		1D1 vs 1D2
		E2 Belgium vs E3 Sth Korea		1A vs 2B = 1								2D1 vs 2D2	
	D1 Spain vs D4 Bulgaria		G2 Colombia vs G3 England		1C vs 2D = 3								
	C1 France vs C4 Denmark		H2 Japan vs H3 Jamaica					6 vs 7 = D					
A2 Scotland vs A3 Morocco		E1 Holland vs E4 Mexico					H1 vs 2G = 8						
A1 Brazil vs A4 Norway				1B vs 2A = 2				5 vs 8 = C		A vs C = D1			
		F1 Germany vs F4 Iran			1F vs 2E = 6								
	D2 Nigeria vs D3 Paraguay				1E vs 2F = 5								
	C2 South Africa vs C3 Saudi Arabia		H1 Argentina vs H4 Croatia				1G vs 2H = 7						
B2 Chile vs B3 Cameroon		F2 USA vs F3 Yugoslavia						1 vs 4 = A					
4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

GROUP E

1. HOLLAND
2. BELGIUM
3. SOUTH KOREA
4. MEXICO

GROUP F

1. GERMANY
2. USA
3. YUGOSLAVIA
4. IRAN

GROUP G

1. ROMANIA
2. COLOMBIA
3. ENGLAND
4. TUNISIA

GROUP H

1. ARGENTINA
2. JAPAN
3. JAMAICA
4. CROATIA

Australia's World Cup defeat to calls for the resignation of current Soccer Australia administrator. However, PHILIP MICALLEF believes David Hill has us heading in the right direction.

As Australian soccer gingerly emerges from the trauma of the MCG debacle, dejected pride and shattered dreams now come to grips with an old enemy.

Not the cynics at large who love to bet more than to have a go at the game of soccer.

These people are on the one hand a few left are not worth worrying about anyway.

The game's biggest immediate problem is to regain the momentum that has been gathering ever since the "new brood" came into office two years ago. And so momentum can only be regained if our huge misfortune with the right and not rekindle old jealousies and politics that kept the code back for

There is no question that our failure to beat Iran was not in Soccer Australia and it hit us like lightning, although never going to be easy to beat the some pundits led us to believe.

Terry Venables, one of the most successful coaches in the world, improved the level of sight in his short stint in Australia. The high quality of 'have a go' football played by the Socceroos in Melbourne for part of the match is ample proof of

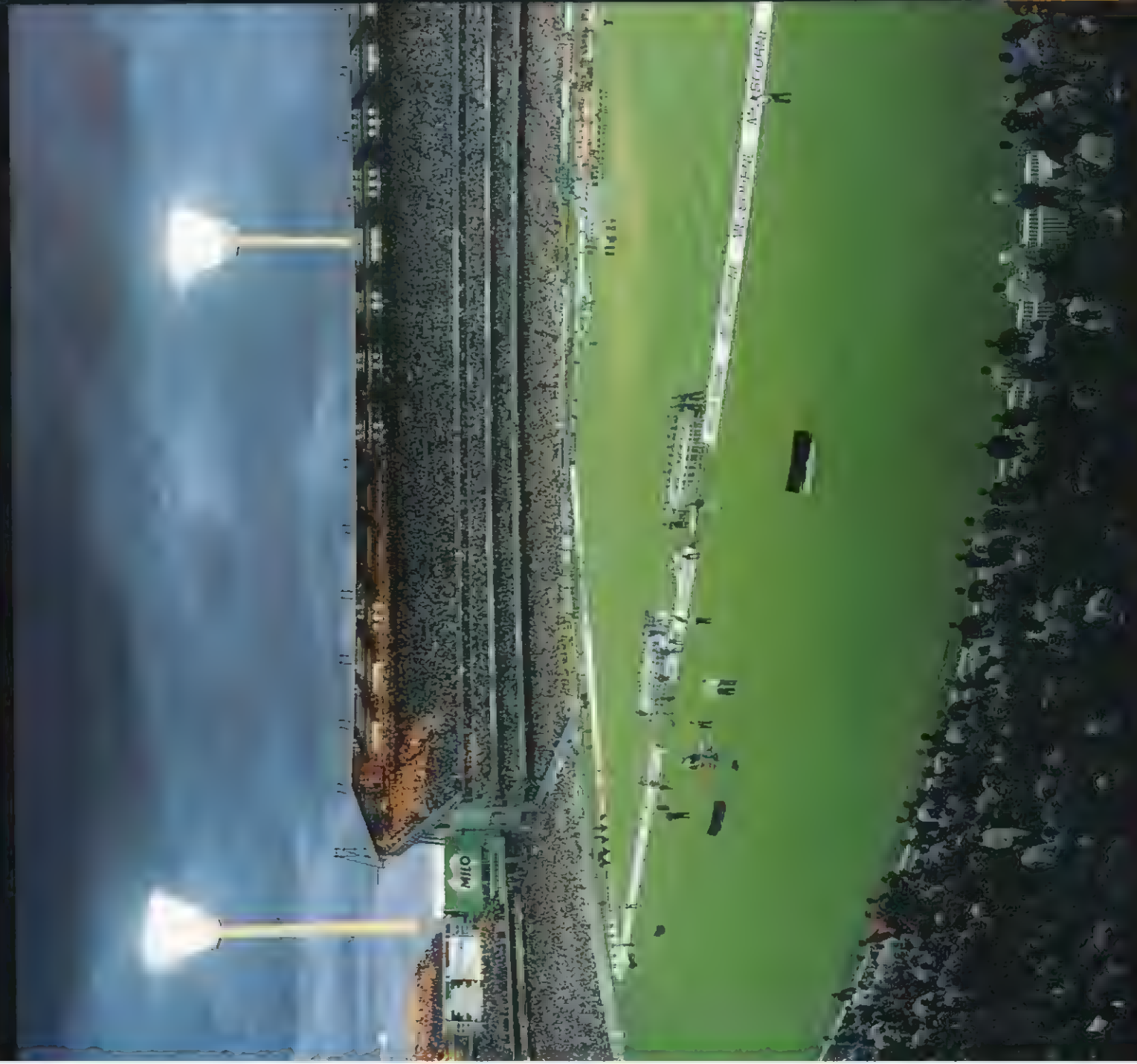
But the bottom line is we missed the World Cup boat and Venables, as he must shoulder most of the responsibility

However that dreadful experience is now and we must draw strength from this sickening mishap to make sure we can even better challenge when the 2002 qualifiers come around, although it will like an eternity away now.

We need to look to the future with

AUSTRALIA'S LEADING SOCCER MAGAZINE

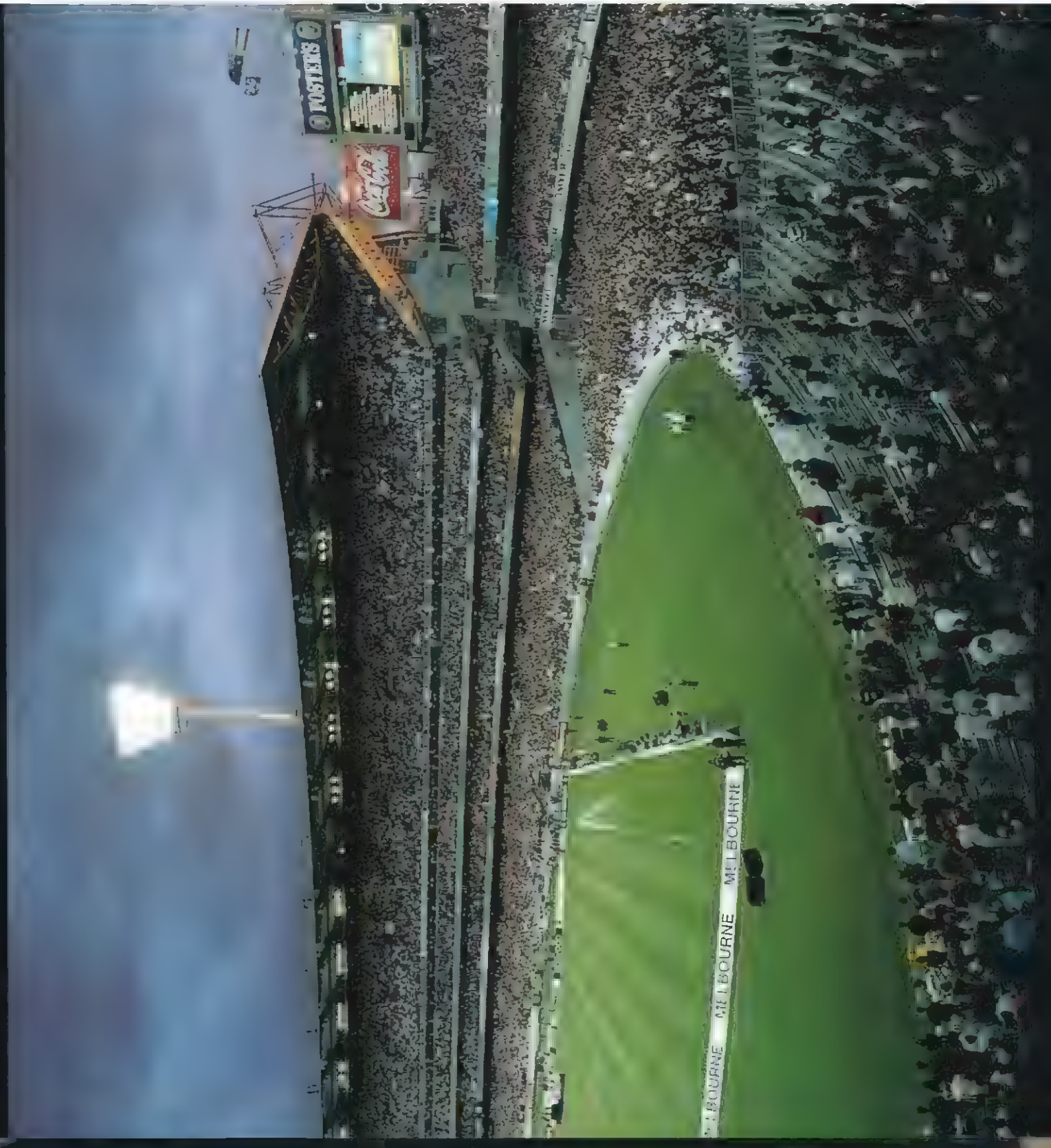
AUSTRALIA SOCCER



TOYOTA World Cup Qualifier - MCG

Saturday 29th November 1997

8.20 PM ATTENDANCE: 85,022



AUSTRALIA'S LEADING SOCCER MAGAZINE

SOCCER

AUSTRALIA



TOYOTA





WAFY
L'Espresso

Forging ahead

Australia's World Cup defeat has led to calls for the resignation of the current Soccer Australia administration. However, PHILIP MICALLEF believes David Hill has us heading in the right direction.

As Australian soccer gingerly emerges from the trauma of the MCG debacle with dented pride and shattered dreams, it must now come to grips with an old enemy within.

Not the cynics at large who love nothing more than to have a go at the game of soccer.

These people are on the wane and the few left are not worth worrying about anyway.

The game's biggest immediate problem is to regain the momentum that has been gathering ever since the "new broom" came into office two years ago. And so much momentum can only be regained if we look at our huge misfortune with the right attitude and not rekindle old jealousies and the bitter politics that kept the code back for decades.

There is no question that our failure to beat Iran was not in Soccer Australia's script and it hit us like lightning, although it was never going to be easy to beat the Asians as some pundits led us to believe.

Terry Venables, one of the most respected coaches in the world, improved the team out of sight in his short stint in Australia and the high quality of 'have a go' football displayed by the Socceroos in Melbourne for the best part of the match is ample proof of this.

But the bottom line is we missed the World Cup boat and Venables, as head coach, must shoulder most of the responsibility.

However that dreadful experience is over now and we must draw strength from our sickening mishap to make sure we present an even better challenge when the 2002 qualifiers come around, although they do feel like an eternity away now.

We need to look to the future with

courage not with fear, with determination not resignation and with optimism not self-doubt.

Soccer Australia has done its best to give Venables and his players the best possible chance to qualify for our first World Cup finals since 1974 but we were not good enough on the day. Or rather the gods did not smile on us.

And as the Australian players, especially elder statesmen Robbie Slater, Milan Ivanovic, Alex Tobin and Graham Arnold, began to realise that their long cherished ambition to play in football's biggest event had evaporated into a humid Melbourne night the knockers were preparing their poisoned obituaries.

Instead of acclaiming the giant strides forward made by the national team the last few years and capturing the mood of a country that for once got behind the Socceroos and genuinely felt sorry for the boys after such a tragic loss, these mouth pieces of the "old guard" could not resist taking advantage of the situation to vent their deplorable bias.

There were several people who originally opposed the appointment of Venables as an expensive home-away-from-home coach but most, to their credit, were able to see the huge benefits reaped.

But not everyone did so. Much to the dismay - derision even - of many soccer followers a handful of journalists still persist with their jaundiced views on what the present administration is trying to do. That is, make soccer an Australian game played by Australians for Australians.

These people form part of an old clique that has been running soccer for decades and got us nowhere, not even when we did reach the World Cup finals in West Germany because soccer did not build on that golden opportunity.

And Hill deserves to be given a chance to succeed where others before him have failed, some miserably.



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He can be abrasive and aggressive, and, as the clash with Iran proved, quite inexperienced in soccer diplomacy.

You just do not say certain things about your future opponents. It is unethical and it can backfire on you.

But Team Hill in a short time managed to get most of the country behind the national side. They did this because they created a perception that the "foreign game" was turning the corner and becoming more and more Australian.

They also made the Socceroos an infinitely more attractive team to watch than the defensive sides we had been accustomed to watching the last 10 years or so.

Venables, with nothing to work for till the end of his contract in July, is a coach in demand universally.



and Hill's position will always remain tenuous because of a leadership style that does not endear him to the state federations.

Both Hill and Tel could be gone by the time you read this which would be an absolute tragedy but, as the MCG game showed so blatantly and so poignantly, sometimes there is no justice in football.

Asia calling

The 29th of November 1997 might be remembered as the day that Australian soccer realised its future lies in Asia. The Socceroos' next major competitive games will most likely be against Asian opposition early in the next millennium - and those games will be to qualify for a finals series to be held in Asian soccer's heartland of Japan and South Korea.

In the mean time one of the game's top priorities must be getting more international competition into the Australian soccer schedule - and that means engaging in significant Asian competitions at both international and club level.

The November night that soccer took over the MCG proved that Australians will flock in tens of thousands to important games against serious opposition, no matter where those opponents come from. The visitors don't have to be soccer superpowers like Brazil, Italy or England so long as they're good enough - and the stakes are high enough.

Asia's reluctance to admit Australia to its international and club tournaments is understandable - why should they help the Socceroos get valuable match practice under competition pressure? It's the same logic that says New Zealand teams shouldn't be admitted to the Ericsson Cup.

But if FIFA has the best interests of the game in this corner of the globe at heart, it must ensure that the Socceroos get more serious, meaningful international competition.

You might not get 85,000 to the MCG for an Asian Cup semi-final against Malaysia or for an Asian club championship decider between Carlton and Sanfrecce Hiroshima - but a huge proportion of the people who watched the Iran game at the ground or on television have had their thirst for big-time soccer sharpened. For now though, the thought of having to wait four years for the next proper game is unbearable.

- JOHN MANGAN



**PHILIP
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World at their feet

PHILIP MICALLEF looks at the form and the prospects of the last batch of teams to qualify for next year's World Cup.

So the big story waiting to happen never materialised and Italy got through to the World Cup finals after all.

As the Italians overcame the treacherous Russians 2-1 on aggregate to reach their 10th straight finals series, two nations were thus able to breathe a huge sigh of relief.

Millions of tifosi saw Pierluigi Casiraghi's marvellous goal in Naples that finally subdued the Russians as the cure for all their anxieties that had been building since Italy failed to beat England in Rome last October.

Italy's progress was also closely followed by the French, who made no secret of their desire to see the famed Azzurri grace their football festival.

The absence of a country like Italy would have spelt disaster for the competition, and not only because of their footballing credentials.

Italy would be expected to draw at least 40,000 fans to each of their games while

the Russians, who are not exactly the most entertaining or followed side in the world, would have struggled to attract half as many people.

Here's the full list of the final qualifiers for France 98:



Italy

The Italians could not understand how they

got themselves into such a precarious position after winning at Wembley.

Perhaps coach

Cesare Maldini's penchant for prudence in away games was his team's undoing. To their credit

Italians did well to snatch a draw with Russia in snowbound Moscow and play well

enough in the return

to secure a finals spot.

The Italian side has only two world class players in the

side: fullback and captain Paolo Maldini and striker Gianfranco Zola.

The rest of the side is composed of hard-working grafters who flourished during the Arrigo Sacchi era.

Maldini snr can look forward to a



Pierluigi Casiraghi (Italy)

SPORTING PIX



good World Cup but his side will have to be more adventurous to entertain any hopes of ultimate glory.

Croatia



There are few more gifted sides in the world than the classy Croats who have superstars in

abundance. But as so often happens in such cases teamwork is not their best asset.

Croatia should have walked into the finals but in the end they were lucky even to make the playoffs.

Croatia's most celebrated player is Real Madrid spearhead Davor Suker, who is a born goal poacher who possesses delightful skills on the ball. Another feared striker is Lazio's Alen

world at their feet

Boksic, whose only fault is that he doesn't score as many goals as he makes for other players.

Croatia are also well served in midfield by AC Milan's Zvonimir Boban and Croatia Zagreb's Robert Prosinecki,



who are approaching the veteran age but can still read a game superbly. And in Slaven Bilic they have one of the hardest men in the game.

Croatia have the potential to do very well in France, if they can work as a team, that is.

Yugoslavia



As with Croatia, Yugoslavia are endowed with some extraordinarily gifted players. Dejan Savicevic is perhaps their most famous performer, having won European Cup finals with Red Star and AC Milan.

Savicevic can be one of the most exciting players on his day but consistency is not one of his qualities.

Real Madrid's Predrag Mijatovic is probably a less gifted performer but his goals for club and country over the last two years have made him one of the most respected 'goleadors' in Europe.

It is hardly surprising that seven of Yugoslavia's goals in their 12-1 aggregate victory over Hungary in their strangely lopsided playoff bore his signature. The Slavs are the game's biggest enigma. They can be brilliant and mediocre in the space of half an

hour and can beat or be defeated by anyone, depending on their frame of mind.

Belgium



It was looking pretty bad for Belgium after they crashed to a 3-1 defeat in Brussels to eventual group winners

Holland less than four months ago. With Turkey breathing down their necks, the gritty Belgians showed commendable resolve to secure second spot in the section and earn a crack at Ireland in the playoffs.

Striker Luc Nilis is playing probably the best football of his career and he scored a glorious goal in Dublin to earn his side a 1-1 draw. The Eindhoven forward was again on the scoresheet in the return in Brussels and he played a major role in a 2-1 victory.

Another player who does not receive the accolades he deserves is Brazilian-born striker Luis Oliveira, a fast and dangerous performer whose hat-trick in Turkey in April probably determined his side's future. Belgium's schemer is Enzo Scifo, a clever organiser who is past his peak and who will be playing at a major tournament for the last time.

Chile



The Chileans owe their first qualification for a finals series in 16 years to a young star who rose to fame

hardly a year ago and a seasoned campaigner who has been tormenting European defences for years. Marcelo Salas, who plays for River Plate in Argentina, has emerged as a quality striker from this qualifying campaign.

His hat-trick against Peru in Santiago in October made world headlines and English giants Manchester United are understood to be keen to sign this stocky striker with a nose for goal. Another player who chipped in with several goals before he got injured four months ago is Ivan Zamorano, one of the best

headers of the ball in the world.

Zamorano has distinguished himself at two of Europe's biggest clubs - Real Madrid and Internazionale and if he regains full fitness in time for France 98 he could be one of the stars of the tournament. It's a shame his team are not likely to go far in the competition.

Saudi Arabia

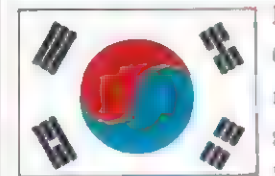


The Saudis did particularly well to win a tough Asian section featuring

Iran, arguably the most talented team on the continent. They managed to snare a 1-1 draw in Tehran and then beat the Iranians 1-0 in Riyadh, but surprisingly lost in Kuwait and China, the section's weakest teams.

The Saudis, under new German coach Otto Pfister, are still hanging on to several players who did so well for their country in the 1994 World Cup, including the giant frame of agile goalkeeper Mohammed Al Deayea.

South Korea

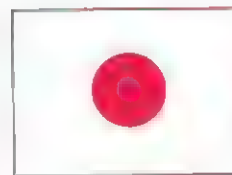


New coach Bum Kun Cha, who made a name for himself as a striker with Eintracht Frankfurt in the 70s,

has done extremely well to mould a young team into yet another typically fast and skilful Korean side. The Koreans won their group pretty comfortably, especially after scoring two late goals to defeat arch-rivals Japan 2-1 in Tokyo.

By the time Korea fell at home to Japan they had already achieved their ambition of playing in their fourth consecutive finals. Korea's best player is defender Li Min Sung, who loves nothing more than to have a crack at goal. His was the last-gasp strike that broke Japan's hearts in Tokyo. The Koreans could take a few people by surprise in France.

Japan



The Japanese, expected not to become the first country to host the World Cup without ever having played

one, looked dead and buried after a home loss to Korea in September. After opening their qualifying campaign with a meritorious 6-3 win over Uzbekistan, Japan's goal

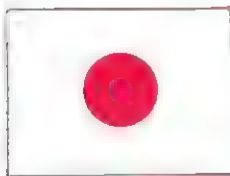


machine came to a standstill.

As the Japanese started to drop points at home and abroad coach Shu Kamo was sacked and replaced by Takeshi Okada. What followed was the greatest comeback since Lazarus. Experienced striker Kazu Moriyasu regained his scoring touch after getting

FOR ALL ERIC
NOW YOU CAN
MAGAZINE IN

Japan



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Masami Ihara
(Japan)

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As the Japanese started to drop points at home and abroad coach Shu Kamo was sacked and replaced by Takeshi Okada. What followed was the greatest comeback since Lazarus. Experienced striker Kazu Miura regained his scoring touch after getting

better service, and midfield player Hidetoshi Nakata started to show why he is considered the most promising player to emerge from Japan in recent years.

Nakata was particularly devastating in the playoff with Iran in Johor Bahru. Iran had no answer to his non-stop play and incisive passing and he ended up dominating the game.

Mexico



The Mexicans have always been considered lucky to be situated in one of football's

less formidable areas.

Mexico hardly ever fail to qualify for a finals tournament because the quality of their opposition is second-rate at best. This year was no exception. Mexico, under the guidance of experienced journeyman Bora Milutinovic, went through to France unbeaten but the quality of their football left a lot to be desired.

And yet Milutinovic had several fine players at his disposal, starting from midfielder Alberto Garcia Aspe, striker Luis Hernandez and orthodox left winger Luis Alvez. Milutinovic's critics claimed that Mexico were too negative – five draws from 10 games – and did not score many goals.

Mexican football authorities seemed to agree. Milutinovic was sacked as coach shortly after Mexico's qualification.

United States

The single moment that probably decided the USA's access to their third straight finals

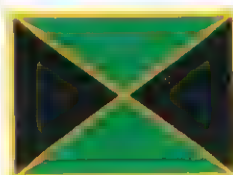


came in Portland, Oregon, on 7 September. The USA were struggling to

overcome a resolute Costa Rica defence that held out bravely until the 79th minute when midfield motor Tab Ramos unleashed a formidable shot from outside the penalty area. It found its way into the net to give the home team a crucial 1-0 victory.

The US team knew then that they were on their way to Europe. They continued their good work by stealing a point from a goalless draw in Mexico City and winning 3-1 in Canada. Most of the men who represented their country in 1994 are still there, but age is not on their side.

Jamaica

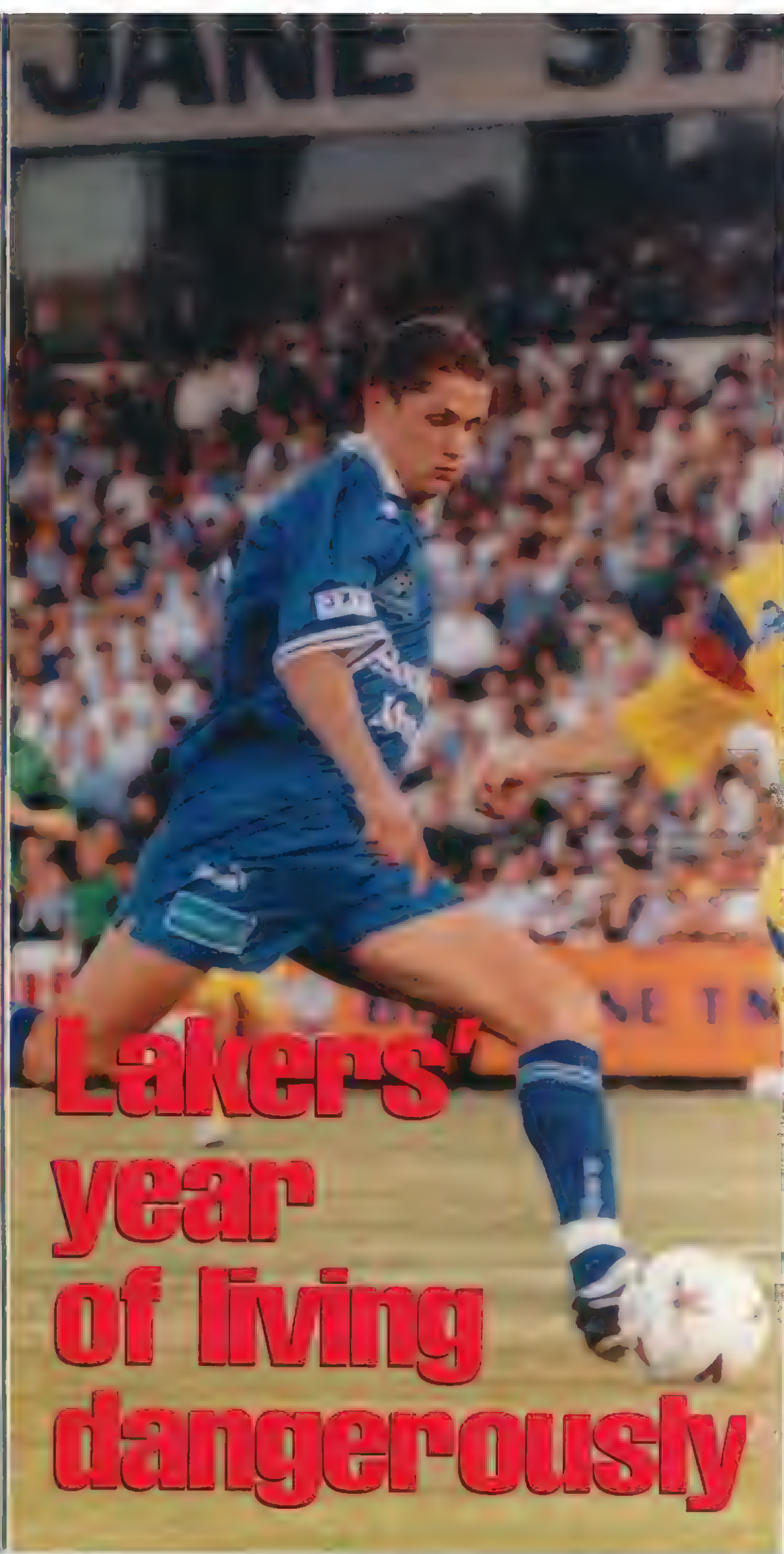


The Reggae Boyz surprised many pundits with the quality of their football based on

individual flair and full commitment. The Jamaicans proved their worth when they outplayed the USA in Washington DC and were deprived of a thoroughly-deserved victory after the home side were given a non-existent penalty which ensured a 1-1 draw.

Jamaica secured their qualification in their very last match when they held already-qualified Mexico to a 0-0 draw in Kingston, sparking nationwide celebrations. Jamaica, whose finest player is English-based striker Deon Burton who plays for Derby County, are the first English-speaking Caribbean team to reach the World Cup finals. Haiti (1974) are the only other team from the area to play in the finals.

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The last 12 months has been a roller coaster ride for South

Melbourne. BERT van BEDAF tackles the big issues with George Vasilopoulos, president of the Victorian capital's most famous and colourful club.

The setting is picturesque. "Let's go up to the grandstand and watch training as we talk," George Vasilopoulos says. Even if the stadium is more like a European minor division ground, the setting is world class. On your left is the ragged skyline of a bustling city. Ahead is the business highrise of savvy St Kilda Rd and to your right is recreational Albert Park lake, with its five kilometres of jogging track.

Lakeside Stadium, named after Bob Jane, the club's major sponsor, is a major improvement on the club's 40-year old former Middle Park stadium that was bulldozed in favour of the Formula One Grand Prix. It was the Victorian Premier and South's No.1 ticket holder, Jeff Kennett's perfect gift to his Greek supporters.

"I joined the board of this club in 1978," says Vasilopoulos, "but I've been around since I was 13 years old, since 1965 when I came to Australia from Kalamata in the south of Greece, where the black olives come from.

"In May 1965, I was 13. My first experience of Australian soccer was at Olympic Park. This club, Hellas, was playing Brunswick Juventus. There were about 25,000 people. For a young bloke from a Greek village, when I walked in I thought there was the national team of Greece and Juventus of Italy, because I never imagined there could be so many thousands of people watching a local game.

"It was foreign to me. I was in paradise. I thought I'd gone to heaven. That was the beginning of my love affair with this club. My brother John and I used to walk from Collingwood to Middle Park on a

Sunday afternoon because we didn't have the bus fare. That's quite a distance how it started. I became president in September 1989."

Vasilopoulos is a manager with the Westpac bank and combines his Lakeside duties with a full-time job and family. "Getting the time hasn't been easy. I manage to combine them all, but we've definitely suffered in the last nine years of my family (Dean 13, Nicholas 11, Michael and his wife Lisa). My kids have grown up without a lot of quality time. But the fanatical South supporters now.

"South Melbourne is the best and biggest club in this country. It is a club that has a lot of supporters and has survived a lot of pressures since the national league started in 1977. People who support the club take it very seriously.

"This club is serious business to thousands of people in the Victorian community. South Melbourne Hellas is supported by the whole of the Greek community. I believe the future of the club is very bright. If any club has a future in the national soccer league this club has it.

"It is one club the national league cannot do without. We'll survive because of the hard work people put in, because of the sponsors, who are probably more than any other club in the league and because we plan to survive.

"We've got a five-year plan in place where we want to be in the year 2000 beyond and how we're going to get there. How to entice more sponsors and keep them happy here, how to get more of the supporters who will be the lifeblood of the club.

"We are also succeeding in attracting young, professional players here. Lots of talent that will be playing in the 2000 Olympics, which will be a big boost to the club. Through the hard work of the club, Jeff Kennett and the state government we've managed to get a base here where no other club has.

"It's a purpose-built soccer stadium. The plans are in place to build a two-level grandstand on the other side. The plans have already been approved to complete the stadium.

Lakers' year of living dangerously

Sunday afternoon because we didn't have the bus fare. That's quite a distance. That's how it started. I became president in September 1989."

Vasilopoulos is a manager with the Westpac bank and combines his Lakers duties with a full-time job and family. "Getting the time hasn't been easy. But I manage to combine them all, but what has definitely suffered in the last nine years is my family (Dean 13, Nicholas 11, Marissa 7 and his wife Lisa). My kids have grown up without a lot of quality time. But they're all fanatical South supporters now."

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"It's a purpose-built soccer stadium and the plans are in place to build a two-tier grandstand on the other side. The plans have already been approved to complete

this stadium to a 25,000 to 30,000 fully covered, fully seated stadium in the next two years. This stadium could also become the home of two codes, if Melbourne Storm, the rugby league club, decides to come here."

Last season's disturbances weigh heavily on Vasilopoulos, who is careful in commenting. "We're taking all sorts of precautions today to prevent accidents like that from happening again. This club does not condone anything like that. But it has not been proven to us today, although we took the blame and paid the fine, by the police that they were our supporters."

"But because the game was here and it happened close to our ground the club was blamed. Last year we paid \$95,000 in fines and we're on a \$100,000 good behaviour bond until June 1998. That fine is hanging over our heads and it's not something we feel very comfortable about or that we're very proud of. Nobody wants this violence and nobody wants to pay these fines. Our supporters have to understand that."

"We've had meetings with the hardcore of our supporters. The boys are aged between 15 and 18. Every time they throw a flare, there goes up to \$5000. I asked what they were doing and they said that's how they were getting their kicks. I told them if they continued like that Soccer Australia will kick us out of the league."

He is also cautious in commenting on the "mainstreaming" of South Melbourne according to Soccer Australia's demands (Vasilopoulos was on the SA board of commissioners during the upheavals two years ago).

"In 1959 when this club was established, its constitution stated clearly that it was established by the Greek community of Melbourne, actually it was an amalgamation of three clubs, one of them being South Melbourne, which at that stage was run by Anglo Saxon people."

"The constitution stated clearly to play the sport of soccer or football as we know it. There's no politics. The club was called South Melbourne, because we've been in South Melbourne for 40 years now and Hellas, because 95 per cent of our

supporters came from the Greek community, who wanted a closer tie with the old country."

"In 1991, because of the ethnic tensions, Soccer Australia (then the ASF) said any club that had a name from an overseas country had to change its name. We had to drop Hellas and two years ago we dropped the emblem and chose the name Lakers - all that goes towards broadening our base."

"What would a political agenda achieve? Greece gave democracy to the world, it gave the Olympic Games to the world. There's never been some nationalistic agenda at this club, but because there are a couple of Greek flags at the ground, because the Croatian supporters and the Macedonian supporters bring their own flags, all of a sudden this becomes an ethnic issue."

Flying Start Australia, the marketing company heavily involved in promoting



AFL stars, is now the marketing arm of South Melbourne, charged with increasing the profile of the club and that of the players in the media."

"Flying Start believes it can help marketing our club and it has some very good ideas. The growth potential of soccer in this country is second to none. What Flying Start can do for us is make players like Paul Trimboli and our Young Socceroos household names among young school kids."

"They're the ones who will recognise these players and make them into heroes, and when they come to the game, they'll bring their parents. That's what I believe Flying Start can do for us, start marketing these players and attracting more sponsors."



New challenge for Petersen

BERT van BEDAF speaks to former Socceroo Mike Petersen as he prepares for his new role as assistant coach at the Lakers.

Mike Petersen is the only soccer player in Australia who has been coached by Johan Cruyff when at Ajax in 1986/87 and by Ferenc Puskas at South Melbourne during his remarkable reign from 1989 to 1992.

Petersen made nearly 280 league appearances, won national championships with Brunswick Juventus in 1985 and with South Melbourne in 1991. He represented Australia 54 times during three World Cup campaigns and was part of the Olyroo squad in 1988 at the Seoul Olympics. He retired, aged 32, before the start of the Ericsson Cup season, succumbing to knee injuries which prevent him from playing again.

It is not a retirement of Petersen's choosing and he hopes to find fulfilment in being assistant coach to Angie Postecoglou.

"I had a chronic right knee injury that's had seven operations in my

career. It took its toll and I packed it in. As soon as I do an hour of training the knee will blow up and I'll be out of action for three days. You learn to deal with the pain, but you've got to be training every day now to keep your fitness levels up

"Basically this is the end of the road in a playing capacity, which was hard to take psychologically. It's hard when all I've ever done is play soccer. I've been a professional soccer player since I was 18. I'm grateful for the career, but there's always that 'but' factor.

"I'm lucky enough to be on Angie's coaching staff. That's softened the blow. It's great to be working with the guys and still be involved. I'm taking morning sessions with the young boys.

"If people want to improve they've got to believe they need to learn. Arnold Muehren who was at Ajax at the time I was there and had won the European championship with Holland when he was 36, told me you never stop



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New challenge for Petersen

learning about the game.

"That came from a guy who had achieved a great deal in football. That's the attitude players should have. If it's good for Muehren at 36 it should be good for young kids in Australia. Just because they get a headline in the paper they think they've made it as a footballer. But there's a long way to go - some kids stop learning and success comes a lot harder."

Mike's father, Hans Petersen, came to Australia with his parents at the age of 15 in the early 1950s from Amsterdam. He

"Had I gone three or four years later I probably would have coped a lot better. I lived in a flat in Amsterdam and I was lonely. I lacked mental resilience and I acknowledge that now."

played for Australia in the 1960s.

Mike found his way to mighty Ajax thanks to the efforts of his father. His dad passed a video tape of Mike on to a former team-mate now coaching at the Amsterdam club and the young Aussie was on the plane to Holland.

He earned himself a three year contract under Cruyff but stuck it out for only one season, rubbing shoulders with Dennis Bergkamp, Frank Rijkaard and Marco van Basten in the process.

"Cruyff was an amazing coach. He has so much technique and so much vision. I went over there and I did well. I was there for four weeks when they offered me a

contract. I thought what a relief, I've made it and then I didn't deal with the situation very well.

"You've got to be mentally tough. You can rest assured that when you're on the books at Ajax you've got the ability. But what you also need is that mental toughness. I was a bit young (21) and I got homesick and I was really unhappy - it was all too much.

"Had I gone three or four years later I probably would have coped a lot better. I lived in a flat in Amsterdam and I was lonely. I missed the lifestyle in Australia which was totally different. I lacked mental resilience and I acknowledge that now. I was there in 1986/87 and I was in the squad that won the European Cup Winners' Cup."

Petersen played for Heidelberg when South Melbourne won the national championship in 1984. He went to Juventus in 1985 and went on to win the title. After walking out on Holland's most famous club, he rejoined Brunswick Juventus for another season. They were relegated from the national league in 1988 and Petersen signed up with South Melbourne for nine seasons, which have made him a household name at the Lakers. Being assistant coach is the start of a new career for the likeable ex-Socceroo.

"As a player you concentrate on your own game," he says, "but as coach you need to be tactically more aware of what's going on around you. As a player you do a job, as coach you have to analyse everyone's job. I'm more than happy to go along and achieve some success at South Melbourne in some coaching capacity and take it from there."

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Hungry like

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Wollongong Wolves are currently competing in the South Coast 17th national soccer league's Optus Vision presenter ROB WHEATLEY recalls his contention for the 'Gong' and assesses the side's future.

Flashback: Wollongong v Melbourne Knights
Round 3 1990/91
Brandon Park

"Get up you soft bastard," echoed a small, parochial group of touchline Wollongong supporters a mere 13 minutes into the second half.

Marconi midfielder Tom McCulloch lay prone on the Brandon Park surface in agony after another hefty challenge from the steely defender Mike O'Shea.

A mid-pitch discussion between McCulloch and the referee after the challenge, with the player questioning whether the referee should be wearing skirts instead.

The early 90s version of a Wollongong performance was simply that; tough, uncompromising and very direct. A football approach and verbal response that was not for the faint of heart.

And Wollongong were a success story with a national league minor premiership in 1988 as proof of their emerging status. Finals appearances in 1991/92 and 1992/93 under the guidance of former South Coast stopper David Ratcliffe.

On the eve of a late-1997 takeover of the Wollongong Wolves, club overseers believe the financial injection of \$1 million divided into \$50,000 parcels will transform the outfit into a sudden contender and not just a side that hangs in there.

The high-flying Marconi side of the early 90s, a year of which I was a part, had many years, via the one-hour touchline, playing aristocrats from the



Wollongong high-flyer Alvin Ceccoli against the Melbourne Knights.

the Wolves

Wollongong Wolves are currently competing in the South Coast club's 17th national soccer league season. Optus Vision presenter ROBERT WHEATLEY recalls his contests at the 'Gong' and assesses the regional side's future.

Flashback: Wollongong v Marconi
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Marconi midfielder Tom McCulloch lay prone on the Brandon Park surface writhing in agony after another hefty challenge from steely defender Mike O'Shea.

A mid-pitch discussion between O'Shea and the referee after the challenge had the player questioning whether the Marconi side should be wearing skirts instead of shorts.

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The high-flying Marconi side of that year of which I was a part had arrived for many years, via the one hour trip, as the ball-playing aristocrats from the smoke.

A combination of forces including an unrelenting wind, a never-say-die attitude from the hosts and an at-times unforgiving surface were a difficult mix to overcome.

Sure in a league fixture in 1989 we had rocked Wollongong with a record 6-0 defeat and other sides had repeated the dose including St George and South Melbourne in 1995/96, but Wollongong have always been difficult if not deadly.

No one doubts that the late 80s and early 90s were watershed years for the club that announced a new home at Brandon Park in 1988.

The Bicentennial year was also a visionary one with the recruitment of overseas-based stars. Ipswich striker Alan

"People at Wollongong think differently to Sydney. They make continuity a top priority, and if you (the coach) don't make it, they don't just jump off the bandwagon."

Brazil, Britain's first £1 million transfer Trevor Francis, and legendary England No. 9 Paul Mariner were atop the Wolves' shopping list.

Nearly a decade on, the blueprint looks certain to be duplicated. Under plans by the national league to implement full professionalism by 2002, international businessman and WIN TV corporation boss, Bruce Gordon, leads the ownership race to drive the Wolves to another strategic plane.

Veteran soccer journalist Phil Murphy from the Illawarra Mercury has covered the round ball code over countless seasons and is enthusiastic about the future.

"Recruiting two to three quality players will lift the attempts for professionalism. I believe the intention of the consortium is to bring players back and to export them. The group will definitely want to make money out of it (the venture)," Murphy stressed.

Club president Brian Hastings has attempted to change the image of a side that played football he didn't really enjoy in the mid 80s.

"The long ball style and physical confrontation was not the best approach. We believe today that every game has to be an event. The game was not attracting families and we worked hard to implement a Roo ball tournament where under-10s play three times a year. We are now surrounded by young children," Hastings enthused.

"Our Southern Hill at Brandon Park is a teenage hangout. It's cool to be there. Local supporters of soccer now know they are welcome and on another level we have expanded to embrace more of our multicultural community."

Two of the 20 share parcels are still to be snapped up, and the club wants to add one or two quality players, preferably from an overseas source that will add to the Wolves' current theme, "Something for everyone", and enhance the previous campaign of "Not just a soccer team" in 1996/97.

The business edge to operations could shake the incumbent status quo at a club described by current coach Nick Theodorakopoulos as very sound, very steady and very loyal.

"The environment is great. People at Wollongong think differently to Sydney. They



Something for everyone

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continuity a top priority, and if you (the coach) don't make it, they don't just join the bandwagon."

Theodorakopoulos's full debut season as head coach in 1996/97 saw the side maintain 11 weeks in the top six moving the heady levels of third place at one s

Hungry like the Wolves

The three week break for the Optus World Soccer Series derailed the momentum.

The side slipped back to finish 10th by late April conceding a massive 48 goals in the overall process.

Coach and president agree that a top six berth is a priority aligned with the need to get the structure right first.

"It's becoming easier to recruit. In the past there was a high turnover of players and we are now looking away from state league guys to an NSL performer in the

Marth, Kelic or Emerton mould," Theodorakopoulos added.

Locally developed talent in the form of Noel Spencer, Scott Chipperfield and Collin Luff together with 25-year-old skipper Matthew Horsley bear testimony to the home-grown process.

Signs are strong that the beg, borrow and steal mentality from a bygone era will be reduced if not erased in the near future complementing the direction of all parties.

On a wider junior development front discussions have commenced with the Macarthur Association representing the burgeoning player and support numbers of Sydney's fast growing south western suburbs centered around the city of

Campbelltown.

Hastings feels that this area and the geographically close Sutherland Association, home to 10,500 registered players, relate more effectively to Wollongong as an NSL club in terms of travel and convenience. The

Illawarra/Shoalhaven juniors are already an ally in terms of organisation and encouragement of a "passing" game in the crucial Youth League (under-11 to under-16 age groups) is influenced by Wolves senior coaching staff.

Wollongong's most successful coach over the club's history is David Ratcliffe.

Ratcliffe featured in the 1988 unit, returned to St George in the 1989 season and was re-installed as player/coach in the first summer NSL competition in 1989/90.

"This was my final coaching assignment. It was a good combination in a dual role. I picked up most of my players without spending a cent including Charlie Yankos, John Filan, and New Zealand duo Vaughan Coveny and Martin Akers.

"In the year we were stronger in defence than anyone else. We broke the record for the lowest number of goals conceded and we had regular 1-0 score-lines in our favour.

"No one doubts we played to our strengths but our biggest problem was holding onto players. Warwick Young (1989/90 starting goalkeeper) walked out one week before the season commenced over \$50 a week. John Filan kept us undefeated for six games into the season and dropped into the office one Monday morning to tell me he was off to England (Filan is currently on Blackburn Rovers' books).

"The contribution of locals like Mineo Benetig signalled the best local talent I had seen but unfortunately many lads wanted to be a big fish in a little pond in the Illawarra competition, not the other way around."

The presence of quality, free scoring attackers has never really been a headache for past or present coaches.

So the formula seems clear. No one suggests that Wollongong has been lean in performance in any of its phases in NSL tenure but shortfalls on or off the park in an increasingly-stagnant league outside the big four clubs is a position the new-look regime will not tolerate.



Wolves skipper Matt Horsley

make continuity a top priority, and if you (the coach) don't make it, they don't just jump off the bandwagon."

Theodorakopoulos's full debut season as head coach in 1996/97 saw the side maintain 11 weeks in the top six moving to the heady levels of third place at one stage.

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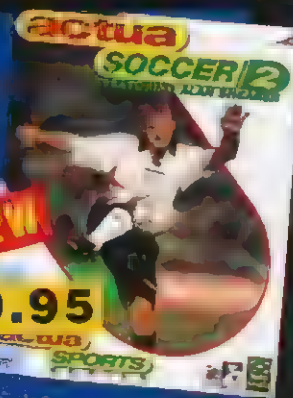


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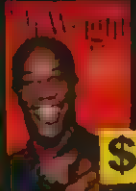


Fergie - The biography of Alex Ferguson

One of the most popular managers in England, Alex Ferguson is nonetheless one of the most successful in English football history. Stephen F. Kelly examines the extraordinary achievements of the man who brought the championship to Manchester United for the time in a quarter of a century and who hasn't lost the trophy-winning habit since.

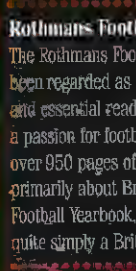
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Mr Wright In this explosive autobiography, Arsenal's controversial striker Ian Wright takes the reader through his humble beginnings at the notoriously named Ten Em Bee club, his broken legs and FA Cup final goals at Crystal Palace and hitting the heights of British football with Arsenal and England.

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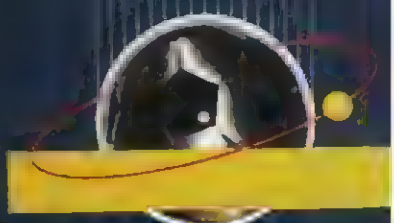
Rothmans Football Yearbook 1997/98 The Rothmans Football Yearbook has long been regarded as the Bible of English soccer and essential reading for anyone with a passion for football in the UK. With over 950 pages of facts and figures, primarily about British clubs, the Rothmans Football Yearbook, now in its 28th year, is quite simply a British footballing institution.

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Venables: The Inside Story by Harry Harris and Steve Curry. Successful coach Terry Venables' often controversial career as a player, coach, administrator and businessman comes under scrutiny in 'Venables: The Inside Story'. Chief soccer writers of tabloid newspapers the 'Daily Mirror' and the 'Daily Express', Harry Harris and Steve Curry examine probably the most colourful figure in English football of the last 30 years.

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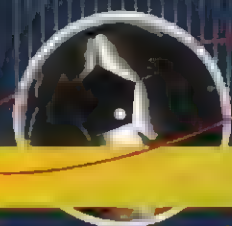
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RETE

<http://www.tin.it/rete>

The Rete site is produced in Italy but is perhaps one of the most international of all Internet sites in existence.

It provides updates on all of the world's domestic competitions including Australia. In addition, it has recorded results of all matches reaching as far back as the 1920's for many competitions.

One of the major features of this site is the NetCast, when minute-by-minute summaries are shown on screen of particular matches or competitions - predominantly European leagues. Follow one of these reports and one minute you are told Juventus is in attack and



the next minute you can read that Del Piero slotted the ball into the net. If you cannot watch the games on television or listen to the radio, this is definitely the next best thing.

Also, soon after the completion of matches small Quicktime videos are available of all the highlights including the goals.

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FIFA

<http://www.fifa.com>

The FIFA home page presents a wealth of soccer information which is what you would expect from the world's governing body.

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statistics on all FIFA competitions: World Cup, World Youth Championships, Women's World Cup etc.

Also within this site you will gain access to the numerous publications and products exclusively produced and marketed by FIFA including coaching guides and merchandise.

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Anissa's half cen



Unloading lorries at 5 am or a desk job with Soccer NSW? Anissa Tann-Darby thought that was an easy job choice to make. The Australian national team defender works hard unpacking trucks for Jewell Marrickville in Sydney because the work gives her flexible hours and an extra training session each day.

feels the fittest she's ever been. The 31-year-old continues to reach peaks in her soccer career - highlighted by her 50th game for her country last year.

She is the first woman to play 50 games for Australia. She has travelled to 19 countries to play and has been lucky enough to play on stadiums that men's World Cup matches have been played on - virtual bowling greens compared with the cow paddocks that women often have to play on.

Tann Darby began playing soccer 25 years ago with her younger brother Jason. Once she turned 12, she had to leave Ramsgate RSL boys team and switched over to women's soccer with St. George. The NSW



Anissa with Paul Wade at a Socceroo promotion.

As if training seven days a week wasn't enough. But Tann-Darby has set her goals high. She wants to play in the third World Cup in the USA next year and represent Australia at the Sydney 2000 Olympics. She knows she couldn't train any harder and she

Institute of Sport is her current team, but she still classes her club as Marconi.

"I spent five happy years there - they are a great club for women's soccer and Frank and Tony Labbozzetta backed our team to the hilt," Tann-Darby says.



century



Stories and profiles by ANNE SPRANGER

Breaking an arm on her national debut was tough. But doing it in a game against Brazil in China made it tougher. To say nothing of the 60,000 spectators there. Amazingly, she stayed on the pitch: just one example of her determination to succeed.

Tann-Darby has also spent a week at AC Milan and names Franco Baresi as her ultimate soccer hero. "He is the best defender I have seen and controls the game with so much style. Without him, Milan have not been the same team. I have tried to emulate him wherever possible and I have all his video tapes."

Player Caterina Morace is another Italian soccer sensation held in high esteem by Tann-Darby. "She is so good on the ball. I am lucky to have played against all the best female players in the world."

There are Australians too that Tann-Darby respects, not the least of whom is Peter Hugg, the administrator who greatly increased funding to women's soccer. And, like many other female players across Australia, she believes Julie Dolan was a player well ahead of her time and not given the credit she deserves.

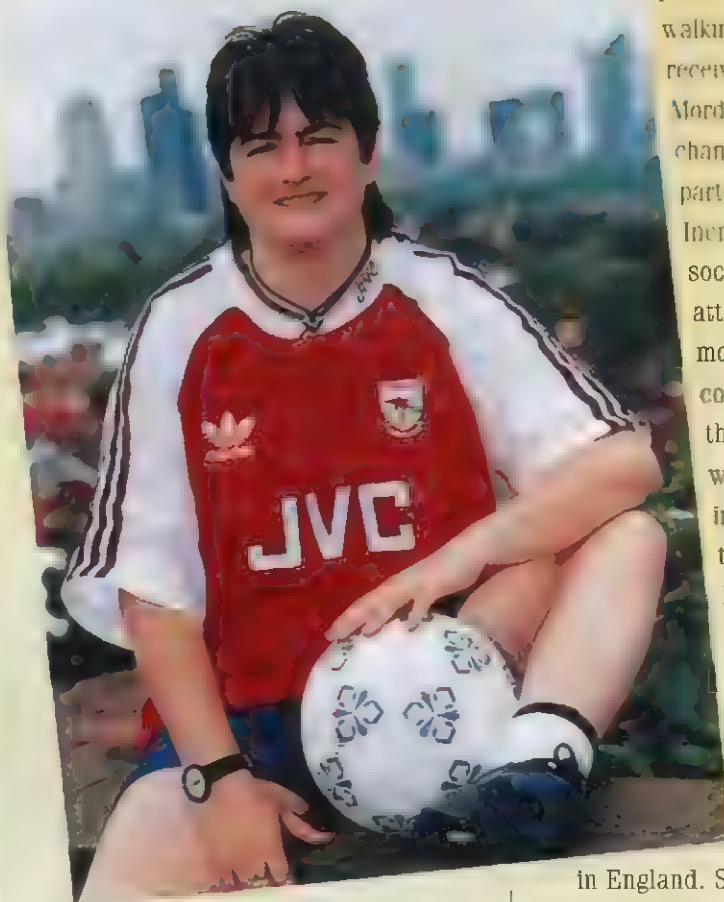
Tann-Darby realises that her playing career will not go on forever and aims to coach soccer. Her degree in Physical



Cont. on page 77

From Arsenal to Australia

1966 - the year England last won the World Cup. Also the year one of England's finest female soccer players, Elizabeth Mordaunt, was born. A former Arsenal player, she brags about being born in such a monumental year. She played in the first ever women's game to be staged at Wembley and has donned the English strip on more than one occasion.



Mordaunt's first team was Wembley Ladies and she was encouraged to play by her PE teacher and her father. "For 10 years my dad never missed coming to watch me play a home game for Wembley but he never forgave me moving to Arsenal and never once watched me play for them."

Five of her 18 years of playing soccer were spent with Arsenal, from 1990 to 1994. Mordaunt also played for England's under-17, under-19 and under-21 teams. "When I put my England shirt on, it made me cry."

A sweeper, Mordaunt always wanted to

play in the midfield, and actually had a run as central midfielder at Uni. But invariably, her coaches discovered her ability to read the game and control the backline and so sweeper she stayed.

Needless to say, Mordaunt's most memorable match was playing at Wembley in 1988. She represented Greater London and played against a team made up of the best

players from England county regions. "We lost 3-2 on penalties but I will never forget walking up those 92 steps to receive my trophy."

Mordaunt would like to see changes to soccer here, particularly in Victoria.

Increased funding to women's soccer, a more professional attitude to the sport and more development in the community are just some of the areas that Mordaunt would like to have input

into. Five-a-side tournaments keep female English players fit over the summer and would no doubt be popular here. She would like to begin coaching in Australia too, having already had

several coaching stints in England. She developed the Queens Park Rangers Ladies team and coached the Fulham and Brentford Ladies teams.

There are over 500 women's soccer teams throughout England, assisted with sponsorship from Coca-Cola and Tampax. And a proportion of the Government's lottery revenue is spread across various organisations and sporting groups, including women's soccer. 'Football In The Community' is a group of people dedicated to raising the profile of soccer around the country.

"They are responsible for organising clinics in schools for both girls and boys,

Cont. on page 77

Tracey Wheel

Date of birth: 26.9.67
Team: Fremantle Soccer Club WA
Position: Goalkeeper
Was keeper your choice of position?

About 12 years ago, our keeper got injured the first game of the season and I was the tallest player and filled in. It just stuck.

First team played for? Wentworthville Uniting Church boys team Sydney

Have been playing for: 22 years
How did you get involved in soccer?

We used to have a park across the road played with the boys. The boys didn't mind a few girls joining in - I guess at eight those things don't bother you.

Occupation: Physiotherapist

Interests outside soccer: I only have time for studying now.

Soccer career highlight: Playing

Tal Karp

Date of birth: 30.12.81
Team: Balclutha Premier Boys Team, Perth
Position: Centre midfield

First team played for: Maccabi Junior Boys (under-8)

Have been playing for: 8 years
How did you get involved in soccer?

My brother's team didn't have enough players one week, so I filled in. They all said "What's a girl doing playing soccer?" so I had to prove to them that girls could play too. It's changing now - they get used to you.

Occupation: Student (Year 12)

Interests outside soccer: Softball, basketball, cross country

Soccer career highlight:

Playing in the under-16 national tournament in Canberra last year and being voted 'Most Valuable'

Tracey Wheeler

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Occupation: Physiotherapist

Interests outside soccer: I only have time for studying now.

Soccer career highlight: Playing in a



final in Brazil in front of a 15,000-strong one-sided drum-pounding crowd in 1995.

Idols/role models: Caroline Launch.

another Australian keeper - for her dedication and hard work over many years.

Most memorable opposition player:

Michelle Akers (USA) - she has such a powerful accurate shot which is very hard to stop.

Who do you think has made the most valuable contribution to women's soccer in Australia?

Tom Sermanni, coach of the national team from 1993 to 1995. He managed to get the best out of the players he selected with his training strategies and rapport with the players.

Tal Karp

Date of birth: 30.12.81

Team: Balcatta Premier
Boys Team, Perth

Position: Centre midfield

First team played for: Maccabi Junior Boys (under-8)

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Occupation: Student (Year 12)

Interests outside soccer:

Softball, basketball, cross country

Soccer career highlight:

Playing in the under-16 national tournament in Canberra last year and being voted 'Most Valuable



Player of the Tournament'. I was also selected for the 'All Star XI'.

Idols/role models: Rachael Mander.

Penny Tanner -

player/coach/president of the WA Women's Soccer Association

Most memorable opposition player:

The entire NSW team! I feel so threatened by their skills - they just blitz.

Biggest influence on your soccer career: Tracey Wheeler -

I'm in awe of the way she has overcome her injuries to play at such a high level of soccer.

Who do you think has made the biggest contribution to women's soccer in Australia?

Sarah Cooper - Australian captain, Sarah Grube - National Teams Administrator, Tommy Sermanni - former national coach, for his help in inspiring the team to reach their goals.

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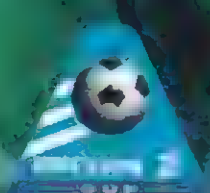
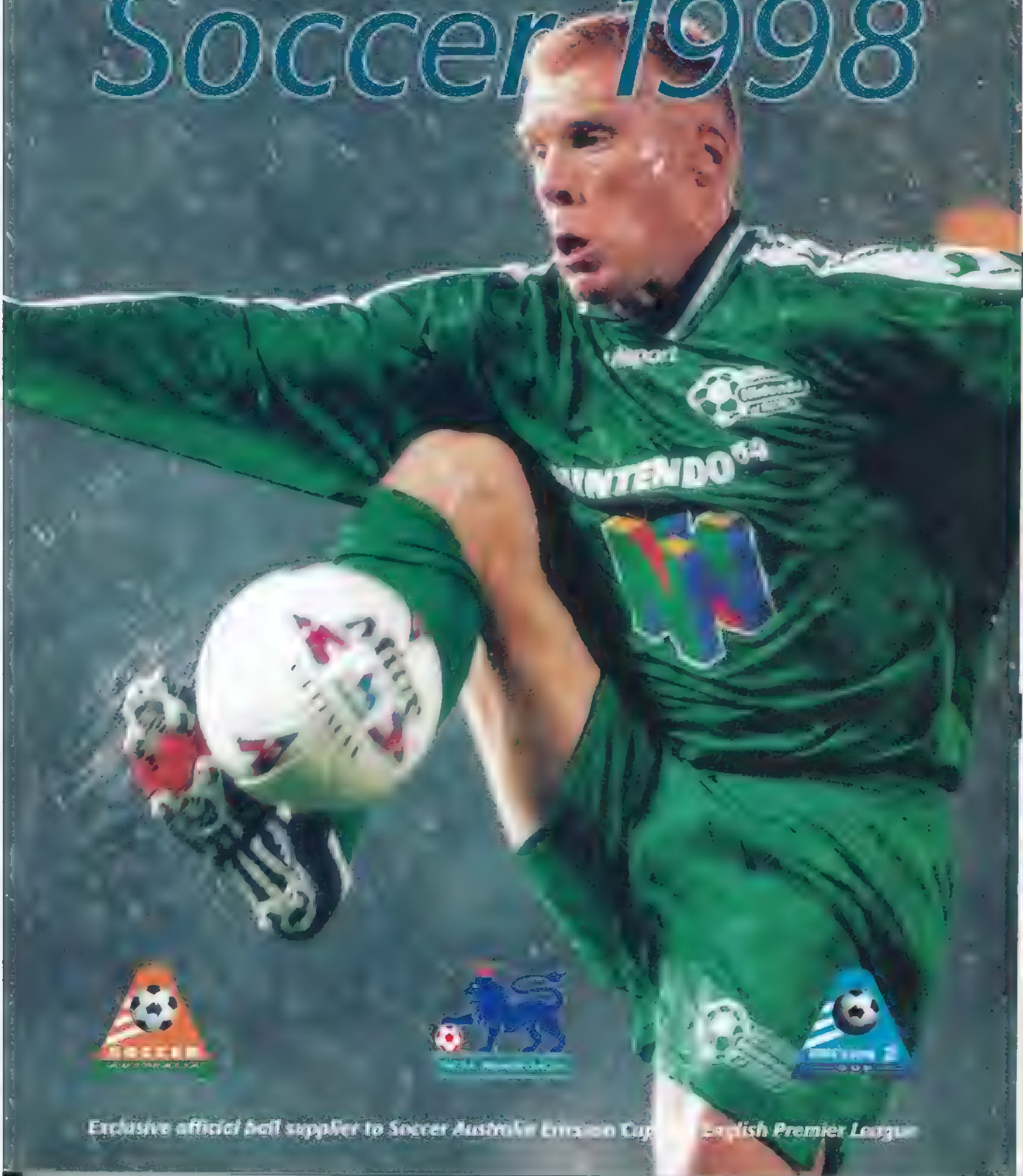
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Q. Which matches do the FIFA ball denomination affect?

A. Only matches played under the jurisdiction of FIFA and Confederations namely international matches involving the Socceroos, Olyroos or other national teams (e.g. Australian Women's team, Under 17 Australian team etc.) require "FIFA Approved", "FIFA Inspected" or "International Matchball Standards" denominations on the ball.

All other matches played in Australia at all levels of soccer do not require FIFA denominations. The only stipulated requirements are that the balls must conform to the "Official Size and Weight" regulation.

State Federation requirements

Q. Is it compulsory for State licensed balls to have the State logo printed on them?

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- Care should be taken that the needle does not break off in the valve, or that the bladder is not pierced when the needle is inserted into the ball.
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OUTSOLE - P.U.

polyurethane moulded outsole with 12 anatomically positioned studs for enhanced traction and pressure reduction.



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Glenn Hoddle - England coach

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Size 5
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Size 5
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18 Panel

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• 780cc capacity
• hygienic pop top



METAL WHISTLE WITH LANYARD
Brass with nickel plating. Nylon cord lanyard.



PLASTIC WHISTLE
Hi-impact plastic construction. Nylon cord lanyard.

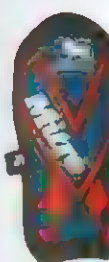


FINGER GRIP WHISTLE
Brass with nickel plating. Comfortable finger grip.

TWO-PIECE INFLATION NEEDLE (SINGLE AND TWIN PACK)
detachable two way valve - unscrew and invert for deflation. Always moisten with saliva or preferably glycerine before inserting it into the ball's inflation valve. One needle assembly supplied.



shinguards



accessories



PHOTOGRAPHS OF PLAYERS USED IN THIS



shinguards

Mitre's protective range offers superior protection for all levels.



SHIELD CLASSIC

the professionals choice
polyethylene shell
3mm EVA foam layer
incorporating 4 hollow pu
tubes for shock dispersal
detachable neoprene
ankle sock incorporating
soft PE discs
size: mens.



Duncan Ferguson - Everton
and Scotland



DYNAMO

4X polyethylene bone
protection
EVA foam backing
elasticated branded
security strap
polyester padded ankle
sock unit
size: mens, youths, boys,
small boys



CONCEPT

2 colour injection moulded
PP/PU shell
5mm EVA foam backing
elasticated branded
security strap
knitted polyester sock with
ankle discs and acrilles
protection
size: mens, youths



LIBERO

2 colour injection moulded PP/PU
shell
stitched EVA foam backing
elasticated branded security strap
size: mens, youths



PRO LITE PREMIER LEAGUE
internal polyethylene shell
textile fronted with embossed
PVC badge
EVA foam backing
polyester padded ankle sock
unit
elasticated branded security
strap
size: mens, youths



PREMIERSHIP

internal polyethylene shell
nylon fronted - for easy
cleaning
EVA foam backing
elasticated branded
security strap
size: mens, youths



HERO

injection moulded polyethylene
shell
stitched EVA foam backing
elasticated branded security strap
size: mens, youths, boys

Robbie Slater - Southampton and Australia in action at the MCG



Stan Lazaridis - West Ham and Australia



accessories



PREMIER

RUCKSACK
210D nylon
zip entry to main
compartment
zipped front pocket
carry handle and adjustable
shoulder straps
Size: 30.5cm l x 14 cm w x
40.6 cm h



PREMIER

MID GRIP
210D nylon
zip end pocket
U shaped entry to main
compartment
adjustable shoulder strap
ventilation panels
size: 54.6cm l x
26.7 cm w x 27.9cm h



PHOTOGRAPHS OF PLAYERS USED IN THIS PUBLICATION DO NOT NECESSARILY INFER THAT A SPONSORSHIP OR ENDORSEMENT RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN MITRE AND THE PLAYERS PHOTOGRAPHED

As a commitment to Mitre's customers a series of great new print media ads have been developed. These will be strategically placed in magazines throughout the 1998 soccer season.

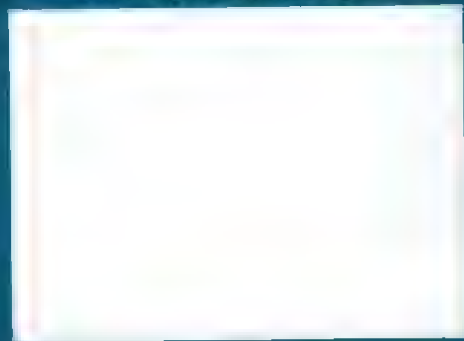


As a commitment to youth soccer in Australia Mitre has incentives to supplement your youth training programmes. Contact your nearest Mitre stockist for details.



Customised Balls: Mitre is able to supply special-make-up balls for clubs, retailers and promotional use. Call your local representative for more information.

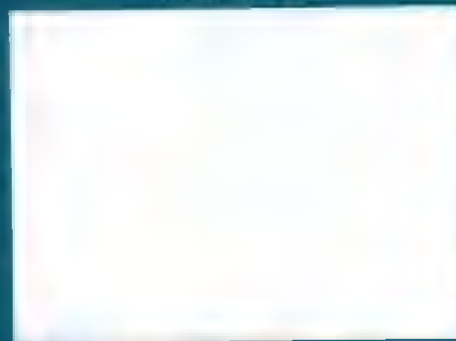
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Anissa's half century

Cont. from page 66

Education from Sydney University has doubt assisted her already, when coaching the NSW youth and senior teams to championship victories.

Darby may sound like a familiar name in the world of soccer. Yes, Anissa married Steve Darby, former manager/assistant coach of UTS Olympic, ASF National Development Office.



Anissa with Kevin Muscat and John Markovic

FIFA instructor for Oceania. He is currently coaching in Australia and is highly supportive of his wife's playing career and delighted at her continuing success.

Needless to say they met through soccer when he was coaching the Australian women's youth team and she went to one of the coaching sessions. Tanna, who has been sponsored by Reebok for three years, is excited by the rising popularity of women's soccer around the world.

She plans to conclude her playing career in the 2000 Olympics and adds "the crop of players will be good soccer players who are also great athletes. I just hope they won't be coming through till 2000."

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From Arsenal to Australia

Cont. from page 66

and ensuring clubs have junior teams," Mordaunt says. "They recognise the importance of looking after the younger players if there is to be a future for soccer. We need something like that here.

"There is nowhere for 12-year-old girls to go to play, no league or tournaments or anything."

Mordaunt has strong concerns about the 'ethnic' flavour of soccer here in Australia and its effect on players, spectators and the actual mentality of the game. "Soccer is a skilful team game, not about what country you come from. Yes, and that is despite the ethnic names being removed from national clubs.

"Ethnic groups still rule soccer and as long as the older generations have so much control over the sport, no boy, girl or woman will be acknowledged to their full potential."

Mordaunt now graces our shores, having moved to Australia in 1996. She was on her way to a coaching position in Minnesota, USA when she stopped over in Melbourne and fell in love with the easy-going personalities of the Australians.

After playing with South Melbourne Lakers for two seasons, she is unsure about her playing future. Her biggest aim is to get permanent residency here and to make Australia her home. She misses her family immensely and despairs at not being able to watch Tottenham play.

A Sports Officer with Victoria University, Mordaunt remembers holidaying in the West Indies and kicking a ball around on the beach. The locals were stunned to see a white woman who firstly *would* play soccer and secondly *could* play soccer, and they had a great time just playing around together. Great way to break down stereotypes. ■

WHERE

IS HUGO

WOMAN

?

Northern ex

Australian soccer players will tell you how tough it is trying to acclimatise to a club in a new country. IAN HAMILTON spoke to three Socceroos who have recently moved overseas to see how they're dealing with the exciting but unfamiliar world of full-time professional football.

After the biggest overseas exodus of Ericsson Cup players ever (20) at the end of season 1996/97, there are now around 200 Australian players plying their trade in northern hemisphere leagues. But while the Okons, Bosnichs and Zelics are 'names', many more are grinding away in less glamorous surrounds.

A full time job, training every day, professional management and resources are the pluses, but injuries and both cultural and climatic shocks must be endured for the privilege.

Robert Zabica

Now at Bradford City on a two-year contract signed in May, the former Socceroo goalkeeper has a new lease of life on a career that looked like being cut short by injury.

"I'm just rapt at my age to get the deal. I'm 33 and it's a great opportunity and financially rewarding," Zabica says.

It was a surprise and all happened because of the right connections, he says, hearing while at Perth Glory that Bradford were

looking for a goalkeeper.

"At the time I was umming and aahing about whether I wanted to play Ericsson Cup again. The Glory are fantastic but I felt I needed something different - I'm in the twilight of my career.

"In Australia you're over the hill when you reach 30, but the attitude is a bit different over here."

Zabica had only played a handful of first-team games by December because of injury and an operation but is hoping to secure a more regular spot in a team that is running in the top half of England's division one, after being second early on.

"It's not the glamour that everyone thinks it is - it's tough intensity-wise, training every day after being a part-timer," he says.

Acclimatising to life in a northern town has been a challenge. Homesickness was a factor as Zabica lived in a hotel while waiting for his wife to arrive from Australia.

"It's starting to get cold and training gets a bit tough then."

Not surprisingly, he's noticed the step up in class.

"It's a pretty big jump. I was surprised - actually, it's a lot faster. There are some quality teams, you've got Middlesbrough, West Bromwich Albion, Sunderland - some quality clubs and it's a tough league. Players want to impress and get into the Premier League. Bradford got 17,500 to a

home game on the same weekend the Glory drew a similar crowd to its first home game of this season.

"But it's a different type of atmosphere because Perth Oval is not really a soccer ground and Bradford is a beautiful little stadium."

Does he still harbour ambitions of playing for the Socceroos again?

"That's way down the track. There are so many quality goalkeepers, Bosnich and Schwarzer and all that. They're there for the time being, I've done my time and enjoyed it thoroughly... but if the opportunity came up.

"Australia is my home and I will always go back there."

Matthew Bingley

Matthew Bingley is another J-Leaguer, joining Vissel Kobe at the end of the last local season and playing the second half of the Japanese season. He's contracted until November 1998.

Bingley has been a regular in the first team under British coach John Baxter, missing only one game through injury.

The Kobe connection came after the team toured Australia last year and played at Marconi.

"And then they had problems and needed a player and gave me a call. I was looking to go overseas because my contract was coming to an end. I was hoping to go to Europe but I was still not sure whether I was going to get a working visa and I think I might have ended up in the same boat as Zeljko (Kalac).

"Everybody wants to play in Europe but for the moment I'm happy where I am. It's been good for me because I was playing games and getting fit for the Australian games coming up. For me, not to be playing for three

months wouldn't have been any good."

Full-time professionalism and the attraction of foreign stars, some Brazilian and a few Brits, has added a few more touches of class to Bingley's game.

"The J-League is a stronger league sure. I think it



makes a lot of difference

it's what Australian soccer has been for for a while. I'm a lot quicker and you learn quickly not to hold the ball long," he says.

"Being full-time has helped, just know you have to train and you don't have work. You get over injuries quicker. Mentally and physically you are a better player.

This is the big difference for Bingley at Marconi trained three to four times a week at night, then got up at 5 am to 10 hours a day as a storeman.

He says it took a while to adapt to the game as well as the country and Kobe is not a big city.

"The Japanese are a friendly race and are always trying to help," he says.



exposure

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But the worst aspects for Bingley are the language problem (he's getting a tutor soon) and leaving home suddenly.

"You do get homesick - but even if I was living in Melbourne I'd get homesick. You can't just jump in your car and go and see your mates."

He believes he's better off with regard to holding onto a Socceroo spot, somewhat tenuous as they are for home-based players.

"Playing in a better league than the national league can only better my chances."

Frank Juric

The former Collingwood and Melbourne Knights goalkeeper did not have to wait long to fight his way into the first team at Fortuna Dusseldorf. After signing a two-year contract for the German second division club one Thursday in August, he was named in the starting line-up for an away game three days later, a 2-all draw which gained him instant press attention in the club's hometown.

Juric played the first six games before he too succumbed to injury which has kept him out for three weeks. But, he says, the coach has assured him his spot is safe.

He is one of six Aussies playing in Germany, with Robbie Middleby also in the second division while Paul Agostino (1860 Munich), Joe Simunic (Hamburg), and Danny Milosevic and Hayden Foxe

(both at Arminia

Bielefeld) are having mixed fortunes in the Bundesliga through injury and bench-sitting.

Juric, first-choice Olyroo keeper in Atlanta and capped twice for the Socceroos, cites playing professionally and boosting his selection chances for the most competitive position in the Socceroo team as his main motivations for jumping ship from the Ericsson Cup.

But he adds: "I don't know that too many people know I'm over here - the players in Germany don't get too much coverage in Australia."

As in England, it seems the second division in Germany is up a gear from the Ericsson Cup.

"The standard is very good here, it's a lot quicker than the Australian league - everyone's sharper. And I thought our league was quite rough but here they've got no mercy at all."

Not leaving a girlfriend back home has made the transition easier, culturally he's had no great leaps to make.

"Germany is very similar to Australia, the only thing obviously is the language. I'm off to German school today."

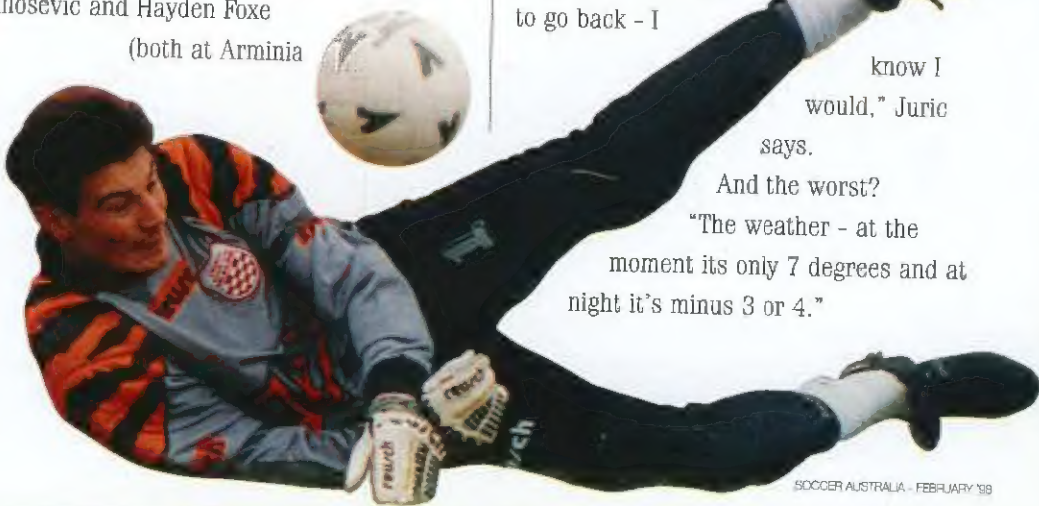
The best thing about the move?

"Being full-time professional, hopefully in Australia it goes full-time shortly because most players overseas would like to go back - I

know I would," Juric says.

And the worst?

"The weather - at the moment it's only 7 degrees and at night it's minus 3 or 4."





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